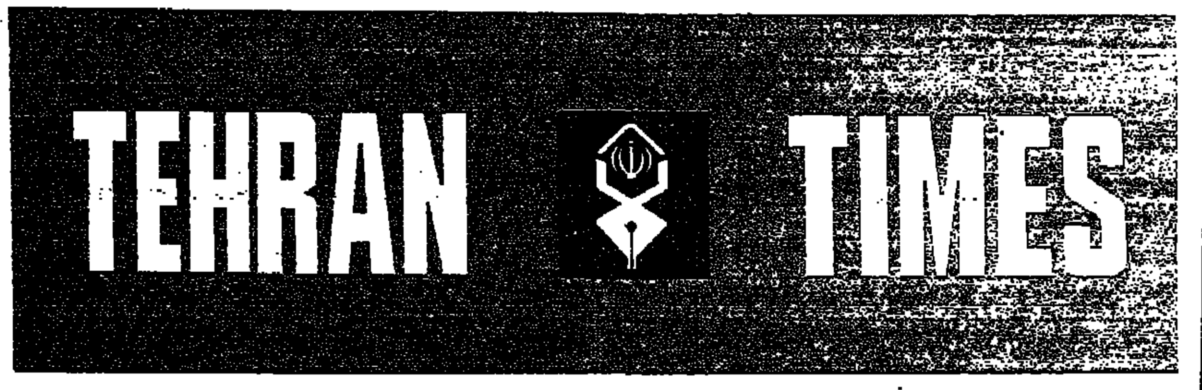


Indian PM to Meet Pakistani Premier

NEW DELHI — Indian Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda will meet Pakistani Premier Nawaz Sharif in May in the first head-to-head between the leaders of the South Asian arch-rivals for more than seven years, India's foreign minister said Wednesday.

Inder Kumar Gujral said that the two would meet during the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit in the Maldives.

(Contd on Pg. 14)



16 PAGES, PRICE 200 RIALS

VOL. XVIII; 281; THURSDAY MARCH 13, 1997; ESFAND 23, 1375; ZIL-QA'ADEH 3, 1417

Serbs Launch Third Attack on Muslim Village in Bosnia

TUZLA, Bosnia-Herzegovina — A Bosnian Muslim village in Serb-held territory was attacked by a mob and houses destroyed for the third time this year, UN officials said Wednesday.

The attack Tuesday came the day after the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) lifted a security cordon on the village, Gajevi, that had been instituted after a previous attack. (Contd on Pg. 14)

UN General Assembly Takes Up Issue of Israeli Settlements

ARAFAT CALLS INT'L MEETING IN GAZA



Compiled From Dispatches

TEHRAN — Palestinians took their case to the UN General assembly on Wednesday, asking it to speak out against a planned Jewish neighborhood in historically Arab East Bait-ul-Moqaddas AP reported.

The move came despite Israeli warnings that any attempt to bring international pressure would only harm Middle East peacemaking. But a Syrian newspaper said the debate provides a "unique opportunity" for Europe to take a stand against Israel and save the peace process.

Arab ambassadors to the United Nations asked for the General Assembly debate, scheduled for Wednesday morning, after the United States vetoed a European-sponsored resolution in the Security Council criticizing Israel for the planned 6,500-unit Har Homa project.

General Assembly resolutions are non-binding, and the Israelis routinely ignore UN declarations on relations with the Arabs.

Nevertheless, Arab diplomats said they thought the General Assembly session was important to demonstrate the breadth of international opposition to the policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

U.S. Ambassador Bill Richardson cast Friday's lone Security Council veto - only America's third in the council since the end of the Cold War - because Washington prefers to keep Arab-Israeli

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Iran, Oman Desirous for Broadening Cooperation

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Visiting Omani Air Force Commander Brigadier General Mohammad bin Mahfuz called here Wednesday for further strenghtening of bilateral relations between Iran and Oman.

He made the remark in a meeting with Deputy Navy commander, Brigadier General Abbas Mohtaj. During the meeting, which was attended by Oman's ambassador to Tehran Muslem bin Bakht al-Brani, the two sides discussed latest regional developments as well as the issues of mutual interests .

Heading a ranking military delegation, the Omani commander arrrived here for a 3-day visit.

Expressing satisfaction with the existing trend of bilateral relations, General Mohtag called for further bolstering of bilateral relations.

During his stay here, the Omani commander is to meet several Iranian military officials.

Velayati Confers With Czech Officials, Arrives in Khartoum



KHARTOUM — Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, arrived here Wednesday on a two day visit.

Velayati who is on a tour of some Asian and African states is to meet President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir to invite him on behalf of President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to attend the next summit of the Organization of *the Islamic Conference (OIC)*.

The minister is also expected to meet with the Sudanese speaker of Parliament and foreign minister.

The next summit of the OIC will be held in Tehran in December.

Before leaving Czech Republic for Sudan Velayati and his Czech counterpart Josef Zieleniec signed a letter of understanding here on Tuesday.

The seven-article document covers agreements reached between Iran and Czechoslovakia before it broke into two separate republics. It states that both Iran and the Czech Republic will honor all the agreements reached.

Velayati after arrival here on Tuesday held talks with several Czech officials including prime minister, foreign minister and minister of industry and commerce and discussed regional and international developments as well as promotion of Tehran-Prague relations.

The Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus voiced his country's willingness to participate in joint ventures in Iran.

Czech minister of industry and commerce Vladimir Dlouhy said that Iran and Czech Republic can embark on establishing tripartite cooperation with Central Asian countries.

Velayati said that Iran is determined to expand its economic relations with Czech Republic and the completion of the Iranshahr power project, in southeastern Iran, can provide a suitable ground for future cooperation between the two countries.

The Iranian foreign minister also called for encouraging the private sectors of the two countries to become actively involved in beefing up bilateral cooperation.

Talking to reports at the end of his meeting with his Czech counterpart, Velayati voiced Iran's concern over the developments in the Middle East and the occupied Palestine.

He reiterated Tehran's opposition to the March 8 U.S. veto of

(Contd on Pg. 14)

MP Warns Rulers in Baku

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Tabriz representative to the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majlis) Hojjatoleslam Hashemzadeh Harisi, here on Wednesday lashed out at the mistreatment meted out by rulers in Baku against the Muslims of that country. He quoted the Holy Prophet (S) as saying that anyone hearing the cry of an oppressed seeking help from a Muslim and fails to help the oppressed, he/she is not a Muslim.

Harisi made the statement in his Majlis pre-agenda speech and was referring to cries of the Muslims reverberating in the torture chambers of Baku.

Addressing the parliamentarians, Harisi said today the outcry of your brothers is being heard from the frightful prisons of the anti-Islam rulers of Baku.

"Many of the chained Muslims in Baku have been tortured to death and many others tried on charges of seeking Islam, the MP said and added that yesterday's communists have changed their masks and are fighting Muslims in Baku in a different guise.

Harisi stressed that the communists in Baku have launched an anti-Islam campaign in an attempt to revenge Muslims who caused the overthrow of the communist government there.

"The trial in progress in Baku is in fact trial of Islam and all Muslims," for the Muslims in

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Religions Can Satisfy Spiritual Demands in West

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Critically suffering from lack of spiritual values, the West is moving toward spirituality and commitment to religion which plays an indispensable role in satisfying spiritual needs, Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Ali Taskhiri told the *Tehran Times* yesterday upon his return from Paris, France where he participated in the conference on Dialogue Between Islam and the West.

Asked whether he witnessed any evidence proving the inefficiency of Western culture, he said that undoubtedly there is a widespread idea among the intellectuals and even common Western citizens that the legal, moral and political system in the West is by no means competent to solve today's problems of the world.

Take for instance the Western double-standard approach toward other nations, undesirable results of the unlimited freedom, human rights and non-commitment of the West those rights, absence of justice, spirituality and proper upbringing of the children. These common views toward Western culture which prevailed in the East now are prevailing among Western thinkers. Even the church is very much concerned about this



TASKHIRI

situation and has become very active to cope with this situation. Although in minority, Muslim thinkers have taken an active part in this issue.

Asked whether the church is ready to fill the social vacuum created by giving up humanism in the West, Head of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, Hojjatoleslam Taskhiri, 52, himself a prominent alim, who has represented Iran in several international conferences on dialogue between religions, said that he has realized through talks and conferences that Christianity tries to maintain an active presence in all spheres of social life.

For instance, he quoted the Leader of the Russian Orthodox church who once had told him that the church tries to assume a greater role in education and training, politics and military.

According to Taskhiri this approach is not confined to the East and that the Orthodox Church is seeking such a role all over the world.

Asked how one can justify this cultural move by the church, taking into account the bitter memo-

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Development, Foreign Policy Top on Agenda of Next President



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The forthcoming presidential elections, the 7th in Iran, require a particular attention and has to be viewed from different angles compared to the previous ones.

After the first presidential elections Iran was invaded by Iraq and had to cope with the war until the fourth presidential elections. As a result from 1980 to 1988 Iran was virtually in a state of emergency, defending its territory against Iraqi attacks along its western borders.

The presidential elections held during the mentioned period, more or reaffirmed the nation's allegiance to the Islamic system in Iran.

From 1989 onward, Iran entered a different stage in its history: It put the state of emergency behind. The construction era began and the first and second Five-Year Development Plans were launched for the first time in the post-revolution period.

The 7th presidential election is going to be held soon while the Second Five-Year Development Plan has not been completed.

There are few points that are to be borne in mind regarding the development and the elections. Construction and development of the country should be continued, but due attention should be paid to the issue of social justice while pursuing the process of development. Equitable distribution of wealth is a crucial issue that the next president should incorporate

(Contd on Pg. 14)

International Seminar on Polymer Science & Technology

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TEHRAN TIMES
TEHRAN TIMES NEWS SERVICE
Editor-in-Chief, Tel: 8809500
Editorial Office, Tel: 8810293-5
Electronic Access Tel: 8809437
8809470
Telex: 213662 TTIM IR
224569 TTIP IR
Fax No. 8808214
ISSN 1017-9410
Address: No. 32, Koucheh Bimeh
Nejatollahi Ave. [former Villa]
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Printed at Keyhan

In the Name of God

But if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, they are your brethren in faith; and We make the communications clear for a people who know.

(HOLY QORAN) (9:11)

OPINION

Netanyahu Snubbed by Moscow

The Premier of the Zionist regime Benjamin Netanyahu during his visit to Russia this week urged the Russian officials to stop their cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran, but was snubbed by Moscow for poking his nose in.. Iran-Russia bilateral ties.

Netanyahu again reiterated the nonsensical accusations the Zionist regime and the United States have been repeating over the past several years. But having first-hand information about Iranian nuclear installation, the Russian officials have emphasized in an unambiguous term that Iran's nuclear technology is meant merely for peaceful purposes.

Russian officials have told Netanyahu clearly that they would continue their cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The reason is clear: Tehran-Moscow ties are strategic.

It is not the first time Israeli and U.S. officials are humiliated in their anti-Iran campaign. Warren Christopher, the melancholic predecessor of Madeleine Albright left no stone unturned in his nasty campaign to isolate Iran. But each time he attempted to disturb a country's cooperation with Iran, his hopes were shattered.

Madeleine Albright also launched an unsuccessful propaganda war against Iran in her last month tour. Her campaign was a total failure.

Netanyahu's Moscow trip was the latest in the chain of U.S.-Israeli attempts to isolate Iran. Poor Bibi had to face the same fate that his master, Bill Clinton, faced in his Moscow trip last summer: failure.

We are not going to dwell on the baseless charges levelled by Netanyahu and U.S. against Iran, for the whole world is familiar with those accusations and their baselessness.

Only a few simple facts will probably bring home to the U.S., Israeli officials that they are wasting their time and energy in their anti-Iran campaign.

Russia has already said a big "no" to Clinton in his embargo call and strengthened economic ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially since the Clinton's embargo call. Europe not only has rejected the embargo call but practically replaced the U.S. as Iran's major trade partner.

We are sure by saying no to Clinton and Netanyahu in their anti-Iran campaign, Russia has established its position as a reliable economic partner and strategic ally of the Third World countries. The Third World expects Russia to follow its own policies, independent of U.S. pressures, thus assuming a determining role in the configuration of international relations in the emerging world order.

Asian countries unequivocally have rejected Clinton's embargo call and maintain cordial relations with Iran.

In reality Israel and the U.S. have been isolated through their nonsensical policy of isolating Iran.

President: Ulema's Role in Structuralizing Islamic Management Pivotal

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani here Wednesday underscored the great role of ulema (Isalmic clerics) in streamlining and structuralizing the Islamic management.

Addressing the officials of the politico-ideological department of the Law Enforcement Forces, the president added that the glorious achievements of the Islamic Revolution and the bright record of the ulema manifesting their sincere efforts during the Sacred Defense and their participation in the construction campaign in the postwar era will help — guide the next generations.

He said that the construction plans and projects implemented in Iran are valuable patterns deserving to be adopted by the Third World and developing countries.

Elsewhere in his address, underlining the role of security in development and construction of the country, the president lauded the services and sacrifices of personnel of the Law Enforcement Forces aimed at preserving the security of the country. The Law Enforcemnt Forces stem from the Iranian nation and owe it to society to make the people feel more secure, he added.

The president also pointed to the role of ulema in boosting the Islamic ethic and promulgating moral values among the armed forces' personnel, including the Law Enforcement Forces. "Safeguarding the Islamic ideology and training virtuous and duty-bound forces are the key factors in leading the society to prosperity and development," Hashemi Rafsanjani concluded.



TEHRAN (March 12) — President Rafsanjani addresses a group of officials of Iran's Law Enforcement Forces.

Photo: Mojtaba Takin

Mohammadi: World Muslims Not Heeding U.S. Words

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi said here on Tuesday that world Muslims do not take any notice of the U.S. repeated statements on the issues pertaining the world of Islam.

Commenting on the statement by the U.S. State Department



Spokesman, Nicholas Burns, Mohammadi told IRNA that it was a reaction to the continued opposition of Iran to the U.S expansionist policies, and particulary to the recent U.S. veto of a Security Council resolution.

In his statement on Monday, Burns has called on Islamic states not to take part in the upcoming summit meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) due to be held in Tehran in December.

Referring to the recent U.S. unilateral action in vetoing a UN Security Council resolution condemning the Zionists' plans of building new Jewish settlements in eastern Bait-ul-Moqaddas, Mohammadi said the veto has isolated Washington even among its Western allies following the U.S. failure in economically isolating Iran.

Mohammadi, who is accompanying Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati in a two-day official visit to Prague, remarked that the ill-considered U.S. act in vetoing the said resolution should lead to further cooperation among Islamic nations and the U.S. could not expect a positive response from Muslim countries.

General Najafi: Iran Continues to Release Remaining POWs

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its efforts for speedy release of Iranian prisoners of war still in Iraq, Head of the Committee for POWs Affairs General Abdullah Najafi said here Wednesday.

In an interview with IRNA, he stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran has unilaterally released a number of Iraqi POWs in three occasions and that it is time for Iraq to reciprocate Iran's humanitarian move by releasing the Iranian POWs.

Iran has freed 974 Iraqi POWs in the past two years. Two of the Iraqi POWs asked for asylum at presence of the representatives of the International Red Cross, General Najafi said adding, the two Iraqi POWs are presently living in Iran.

He further called on international organizations particularly the Red Cross to press the Iraqi government to take positive and practical steps towards releasing the Iranian POWs.

The Iraqi officials give astronomical figures on Iraqi POWs in Iran and it is not clear what objectives they are pursuing, he told IRNA. He added that Baghdad knows well that a large number of Iraqi POWs have taken asylum in Iran and are presently living in different cities like other Iranian nationals.

There are many documents proving presence of a significant number of Iranian POWs in Iraq such as their televised photos, their pictures in the Iraqi press and press of other countries and also radio tapes of their messages, General Najafi noted.

Referring to his recent meeting with Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, he said that the commission is working with the Foreign Ministry to bring home the remaining Iranian POWs, still in captivity in Iraq.

Vaezi Confers With Turkmen Vice President

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs Mahmoud Vaezi met with Turkmen Vice President and Minister of Foreign Affairs Boris Sheikhmoradov in Ashkhabad on Tuesday.

In the meeting the Turkmen official announced that the extraordinary summit meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) will be held in Ashkhabad in May.

According to IRNA, he also called for greater Tehran-Ashkhabad consultations in this regard.

Sheikhmoradov also urged the Caspian Sea littoral states to speed up formulation of the sea's legal regime.

He reiterated that his country is not involved in any military accord adding that Turkmenistan considers friendly relations with all its neighbors particularly with Iran and Russia as a must for its stability and security.

Welcoming the holding of ECO summit in Ashkhabad, Vaezi voiced Iran's readiness to play an active role in the meeting.

Commenting on critical situation in Afghanistan, the Iranian official said that escalation of war in that country will be threatening for regional security.

Turning to the Tajik peace talks, Vaezi stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its constructive role in the talks.

Tehran will host the next meeting of delegations of warring Tajik parties in April, he said.

Habibi Attends Islamic Caligraphy Festival

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — First Vice President Hassan Habibi attended the 'Caligraphy Festival of the World of Islam,' being held in Contemporary Arts Museum in central Tehran on Monday.

During the festival, opened on February 9, 738 caligraphy pieces of 490 artists from 21 countries are on display.

Also the first gathering of caligraphists of the world of Islam is scheduled to be held in the same place April 20-24.

2nd Iranology Seminar Ends in Beijing

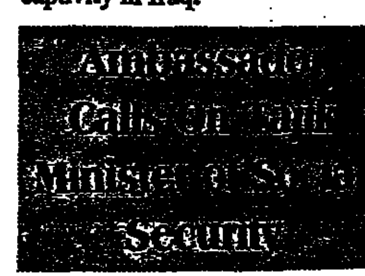
Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The second Iranology seminar which strated work in Beijing Monday, concluded yesterday, an IRNA report said.

The three-day seminar, organized by Center for Research on Iranian Culture, was attended by researchers from Iran and China at Beijing University's Faculty of Oriental Studies.

The influence of Iranian culture and customs on various parts of China was among the topics discussed at the seminar.

The first seminar on Iranology was held in January 1992 at Beijing University.



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iran's Ambassador to Dushanbe, Rasoul Musavi, called on Tajik Minister of Social Security Abdussattar Jabborov, on Wednesday, an IRNA report said.

The two sides discussed cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Tajikistan as well as the performance of the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee in the former Soviet Republic.

Thanking for the assistance given to his country by the Islamic Republic, Jabborov expressed grief over the deadly earthquake which rocked Ardebil region, northern Iran on February 28.

Imam Khomeini Relief Committee opened a branch in Dushanbe in 1995 to help the Tajik needy families.

A Powerful Aftershock Scares Ardebil Residents

ARDEBIL — An aftershock measuring 3.9 degrees on the open-ended Richter scale shook the city of Ardebil and its vicinity in this northwestern province at 22:10 hours local time Tuesday.

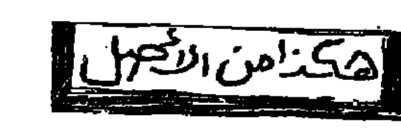
The aftershock which occurred after a few days of relative calm frightened the local people.

According to Esmael Bayram Nejad, head of Tabriz Seismological Base, in East Azarbaijan Province, over 1,000 aftershocks have been registered in the region since February 28 when a quake with a magnitude of 5.5 hit the Ardebil region.

He told IRNA correspondent here that intensity of some of the aftershocks were between 3.8-4.2 degrees on the Richter scale.

The February 28 quake in Ardebil claimed lives of over 965 persons, injured 2,600 persons and destroyed 11,200 houses.

(IRNA)



Mirsalim: Tourism Will Increase People's Awareness

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Third National Conference on Iran-Touring and Tourism opened here yesterday at the arts building of the Center for Fostering Intellectual Potential of Children and Teenagers.

In his inaugural address, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mostafa Mir-Salim expressed hope for removing some misunderstandings regarding the notion of tourism. "In view of some verses in the Holy Quran, which call on Muslims to travel on land, tourism should be given a firm basis by the government," he added.

The minister further said that travelling should be aimed at learning from the experience of others and modelling on their achievements. "Thus, conducting tours is not only for joy and pleasure, but it will also add to the people's knowledge and awareness," he stressed.

Underlining the need for devising feasible strategies for promoting tourism, Mir-Salim noted that more tourist camps and facilities should be established across the country, especially at places where there are holy sites or tourist attractions.



سومین نشست ملی ایرانگردی و جهانگردی
((جمهوری اسلامی و جهانگردی))
The 3rd National Conference
On Iran-Touring & Tourism
(Islamic Republic & Tourism)
Ministry Of Culture & Islamic Guidance ;Deputy Ministry InTourism and Pilgrimage Affairs

The Deputy Islamic Guidance Minister for Tourism and Pilgrimage, Hossein Taheri, was the next speaker at the gathering. He submitted a report on the process of regulating the conducting of tours in Iran in the past few years and noted that out of 200 articles sent to the secretariat of the conference, some 70 have been selected to be presented.

He added that the conference aims to deal with such topics as tourism and Islamic culture, considering tourism in Islam from a historic viewpoint, and the socio-cultural aspects of promoting tourism.

"Since 1989, the number of foreign tourists visiting Iran has had an annual growth rate of 15 percent and we hope the number will soon reach 700,000 per year, as anticipated in the Second Five-Year Development Plan," the deputy minister said.

The conference will conclude on Thursday, Mar 13.

First Gathering on Edification, Theology School to Start Work

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The First gathering on edification and theology school will start work in Qom Thursday, Head of the Islamic Propagation Organization Hojjatoleslam Mohmoud Mohammadi Araqi announced here Tuesday.

Speaking at a press conference he said that the two-day gathering aims to commemorate more than half a century of devotions of the great philosopher of Islam, Ayatollah Seyed Reza Bahauddini who is now at 89.



The gathering will be inaugurated by Ayatollah Ali Meshkini, he said.

Hojjatoleslam Araqi added that the Islamic Propagation Organization has set up a special headquarters for commemoration of the Islamic ulema and thinkers, Ayatollah Seyed Reza Bahauddini was one of the outstanding ulema of Qom theology seminary. He was also a classmate of the father of the Islamic Revolution, the Late Imam Khomeini. He has been the instructor of prominent figures such as Professor Mottahari, Hojjatolesalm Mostafa Khomeini and Ayatollah Meshkini.

Mahlouji: Muslim Countries Enjoy High Technical Potentials

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Minister of Mines and Metals Hussein Mahlouji here on Tuesday said that Muslim countries enjoy high technical potentials and that they should make optimal use of their own resources and technical capabilities.

In his meeting with Kazakhstan ambassador to Tehran, Mahlouji underlined that Muslim nations should not pay for expensive European technical equipments while they are able to produce such equipments within their own countries.

He added that the West sees the Third Word countries as its own exclusive consumers and that technical capabilities of Muslim nations as well as their experiences in management pave the way for them to make themselves free from the economic domination of the West.

The Iranian minister further stressed that Muslim countries are able to carry out huge development projects through close cooperation with each other.

As for Iran's political and economic stand, Mahlouji said that the Islamic Republic of Iran is strongly determined to allocate the main parts of its technical and commercial activities to Central Asia and Africa.

The Kazakh ambassador for his part, stressed on expansion of ties between Iran and Kazakhstan and called for settling the existing problems in the way of commercial ties between the two countries.

The two sides also exchanged views on boosting cooperation in the fields of mines and minerals.

Meanwhile in a separate meeting with visiting Guinean minister of roads and transportation, Mahlouji said that the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to upgrad cordial relations with Muslim African countries.

He added that Iran is ready to share its experiences with African nations in management and technical fields.

In the Name of God



Esfahan Steel Plant

INVITATION TO TENDER NO. 75/2

Esfahan Steel Co. affiliated to the National Iranian Steel Co. intends to purchase 700,000 mt coking coal with the following specifications on FOB basis through international tender.

Interested bidders may submit their signed & stamped offers in two separate sealed envelopes as follows utmost by the official closing time on March 18, 1997 and obtain receipt:

a) Envelope A to contain the technical data of the coking coal and a proforma - invoice without any price.

b) Envelope B to contain the FOB price and a bid bond guarantee (acceptable to Bank Melli Iran) for 5% of the quoted price.

NOTES:

1- Terms of payment is by unconfirmed irrevocable LC.

2- Bank charges outside Iran and the fees of inspection by an internationally recognized company will be for seller's account.

3- Esfahan Steel Co. will be free to purchase a portion of the goods or the whole goods and to accept or reject an offer or all offers.

4- Bids submitted will be opened at the Supply Division of Esfahan Steel Co. at 9:30 a.m. on April 6, 1997.

Bidders or their official representatives may attend the bids opening meeting.

5- The entire 700,000 mt coal should be delivered within one year in 42,500 mt shipments.

6- The specifications of the required coal are as follows:

a) Specifications for 120,000 mt	b) Specifications for 120,000 mt	c) Specifications for 460,000 mt
TM: 10% max.	TM: 10%	TM: 9.5%
Ash: 6.5% max.	Ash: 8.5% max.	Ash: 8.0% +/- 0.3%
Vol: 25-27.5% max.	Vol: 18-21%	Vol: 20-24%
Sul: 0.5% max	Sul: 0.8% max	Sul: 0.6% +/-0.05%
Fluidity: 1000 typical	FSI: 8-9	Csn: 8 typical
Dilatation: 80%		Dilatation: 60 typical
FSI: 7.5 min.		Fluidity: 350 typical

Interested bidders are requested to refer to one of the following addresses for submitting the said envelopes A & B:

In Tehran: Office of the Esfahan Steel Co.'s Supply Division, Koocheh Shahed, Karimkhan Zand Avenue, Vali-e Asr Sq., Tehran, Tel: 896103

In Esfahan: 1. Office of the Esfahan Steel Co.'s Supply Division, First Floor of the Zob-e Ahan Parking, Takhti Sq., Esfahan, Tel: 205005 & 204035.

2- Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Towhid Bldg., Esfahan Steel Co., Km 45 of Esfahan-Shahrekord Road, Esfahan, Tel: 324973 Fax: 031-325130

Esfahan Steel Co. ESFAHAN STEEL CO.

CBI Says Iran's Economy Promising

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iran's revenue out of export of non-oil goods in a 9-month period, starting from Iranian calendar year (March 20, to December 20, 1996) has been $2.36 billion while revenues from exporting of oil and gas in the same period has been $14.5 billion.

In the same period the total worth of FOB import of goods to the country has been $11.63 billion. The country's balance of trade amounted to $5.23 billion in the 9-month period, a report by the Public Relation Office of Central Bank of Iran said yesterday.

According to the report, Iran's inflation rate has dropped to 24 percent up to February 18 this year which is comparable to last year's 49.4 percent rate.

On the basis of Iran's Second Five-Year Development Plan, the inflation rate should be reduced to 12.5 percent by the end of the plan in 1999.

CBI further said that the country's payment of outstanding forex payments has been satisfactory with relative successful control of inflation rate.

Iran's Offshore Oil Capacity to Double

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iran's offshore crude oil production capacity is set to double from 570,000 barrels per day to 1.1 35 million bpd, according to National Iranian Oil Company Director for Offshore Operations, S.E. Jalilian.

He was quoted by *Energy Compass* saying that the expansion will be met from existing development contracts.

This include an increase in capacity of Doroud field to 250,000 bpd from around 170,000 bpd, additional production at Foroozan and a rise from 30,000 bpd to 55,000 bpd at Sirri D and Nosrat.

The expansion also allows for a revision downward for the estimated long-term output capacity at Bahregansar to 70,000 bpd from an earlier projection of 120,000 bpd, *Energy Compass* said.

Saudi-India Trade Exchange Up

ATHENS – Trade exchange between Saudi Arabia and India rose to $4. 5 billion in 1996, 20 percent more than the previous year,*the Arab news* reported.

India imports from Saudi Arabia 23 percent of its oil needs and 43 percent of natural gas requirements in addition to petrochemicals while Saudi Arabia imports textiles and industrial and agricultural products, said the Saudi paper. *IRNA*

Iran Suitable for Foreign Investment

Tehran Times Service



TEHRAN - Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Mohsen Nourbaskhsh said in Tokyo Tuesday that Iran is suitable for foreign investment because of its natural potentials and manpower.

Nourbakhsh who is currently in Tokyo made the remark speaking in a one-day seminar on Iran's economic development, IRNA reported.

He said various factors including connection with Central Asian and Persian Gulf countries as well as Far East through the Silk Road all contribute to make Iran a trade center.

Briefing the participants on the status of Iranian economy, the CBI governor said that the country's economy has shifted towards promoting and encouraging non-oil exports.

He added that during the first and second economic development plans efforts have been channelled to reinforcing the economic infrastructure and projects such as water, power, transportation, road and ports.

Nourbakhsh regarded funneling of investment to establish giant units to produce oil, gas and petrochemical products as other moves taken during the past decade to consolidate the economic foundation of the country.

WFP Launches Oil for Schooling Girls Program in Iran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The World Food Program (WFP) in Iran has launched its oil for schooling of girls scheme at Semnan camp for Afghan refugees. This scheme provides Afghan and Iraqi refugee girls with a 4.6 kg can of oil for every month of attendance at school, announced the United Nations Information Center in Tehran in a press release on Wednesday.

The aim of this program is to encourage parents of refugee girls to enrol their daughters in schools and to continue to send them on a regular basis and at the same time to improve the nutritional intake of refugee families in camps. A total of 147 Afghan primary schoolgirls, who had all attended school regularly for the past month lined up in the school yard to receive their first monthly ration.

This program which was launched on 11 March, will be implemented in 5 other Afghan camps and in 26 camps where Iraqi refugees reside. Altogether about 5,800 Iraqi refugee girls and 1,200 Afghan refugee girls will benefit from this scheme every month during the current school year. In addition, about 230 lady school teachers who will assist in the implementation of this scheme will receive one can of oil every month.

U.S. Protests Against S.Korea's Anti-Import Drive

Tehran Times Service

SEOUL - A U.S trade representative has lodged a protest against a South Korean austerity campaign which has driven consumers and businesses away from imports, officials said in Seoul Wednesday.

The protest was delivered on Tuesday by Sean Murphy, an envoy from the U.S. Trade Representative's (USTR) Office, who arrived in Seoul on Monday, AFP reported.

"U.S trade officials suspect the current frugality drive has been orchestrated by our government," said Choi Hoon, an international trade official at the Ministry of Finance and Economy (MOFE).

Choi conceded that the drive was creating "widespread concern" with South Korea's trade partners.

"But there would be no serious friction as the United States enjoys trade surpluses with South Korea," he predicted.

The campaign, supported by the media, started last year when South Korea's current-account deficit nearly tripled to 23.7 billion dollars and has intensified this year.

Choi defended the campaign as "a civic movement" targeting all luxury goods whether domestic or foreign. He said it was "spontaneously initiated by consumer groups and the business community to cut the countrV's snowballing current account deficit."

Choi and other trade officials said the United States was taking issue with the campaign out of concern that it may develop into an irrevocable anti-import movement.

"Foreigners seemed concerned about an irrevocable anti-import campaign, but I don't think relations with our trading partners will be strained seriously," a trade and industry ministry official told AFP.

But foreign businessmen who have seen their consumer goods sales plummet say the campaign is fostered by the government and has a strong anti-import bias.

"The community is deeply concerned at the intensifying 'frugality' campaign" which has been running in Korea since mid-1996," the European Union said Tuesday at a WTO goods council meeting in Geneva.

The United States joined Europe in pressing Seoul to make a clear public statement reassuring trade partners about its commitment to respect WTO obligations.

They complained of frequent cases of "administrative harassment" carried out directly by government agencies such as customs delays, regulatory and labeling requirements, tax audits and publication of misleading statistics.

Statistics show that imports of consumer goods, though growing by leaps and bounds, account for less than 10 percent of South Korea's imports, but officials, and newspapers, regularly attribute the deficit to luxury imports.

The austerity campaign is drawing quiet support from South Korean consumers. Conglomerates, however, have told EU firms they were reluctantly cutting down on lucrative imports because of government pressure.

For an example, U.S car sales in Seoul have returned to levels in the 1980s, when South Korean tax officials threatened punitive tax treatment for luxury-car owners.

Government officials blamed economic problems in the country, but foreigners have kept an eye on tax officials who requested customer lists from car-leasing companies last year.

Tax officials justified their probe as a routine work to detect illegal expenditures by corporations. But it has effectively slowed foreign car sales, irking Seoul's trading partners.

More Int'l Aid for Iranian Quake Victims

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN – A letter faxed from United Nations Information Centre to the *Tehran Times* said more international donations have been received for the victims of the recent earthquake in Ardebil, as a result of the UN efforts.

The Italian Embassy has donated $226,000 worth of relief items and the New Zealand Embassy contributed $500,000 in cash.

The Japanese Embassy has provided $150,000 in cash and $250,000 in kind. The figures correct our pervious press release in which the cash amount was shown as $15,000. The error is regretted.

Rls 1 bn Allocated to Preservation of Historical Sites in Kashan

KASHAN, Isfahan Prov – Some Rls. one billion has been earmarked this year to renovation of historical sites and monuments in Kashan, Seifollah Aminian, head of the local cultural heritage organization said here on Monday.

According to the official, the historical sites include Fin Garden, Soleimanieh Spring, tomb of Baba Afzal Marghi, Bibi Zeinab Yazdel and about a dozen other historical sites as well as Ghazi historical complex in Aran and Bidgol region.

Kashan is an ancient city with a 7,000 year old history and has 960 historical sites and monuments.

ASEAN CCI Strives to Eradicate Poverty

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The ASEAN Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) sees the need to eliminate poverty as part of the ASEAN 2020's vision and the efforts should be reflected in its business strategy, its chairman Aburizal Bakrie said Tuesday.

Businessmen should take part in efforts to eradicate poverty, as it is also the social responsibility of the business sector, Bakrie said after closing the ASEAN CCI meeting, an IRNA-ANTARA dispatch. said.

He said this is part of the results of the 53rd ASEAN CCI meeting which will be submitted the percent above the poverty line.

A similar problem was also discussed at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Manila last November, as advanced countries are also interested in improving the welfare of developing countries in a bid to expand the market for their products.

"With the ASEAN's economic growth, there will be a gross domestic product of $2 billion to $3 billion in 2020," he added.

He said it is this ideal for the ASEAN to create a conducive investment climate in a bid to improve the ASEAN's welfare.

On the ASEAN CCI meeting, Bakrie said the meeting has discussed strategic problems which had also been discussed at the ASEAN CCI meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia last February 28 to March 1.

The meeting has decided that the aim of the strategic plan was to anticipate the 21st century, he said.

The ASEAN should play a greater role in global trade, he added.

Referring to the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules, he said ASEAN countries, together with other developing countries, should among others give inputs on labor standards, investment policy and competition, liberalization of trade tariff, intellectual property rights and non-tariff barriers.

He also called on developing countries to prepare themselves very well in the multilateral negotiations since a developed ASEAN would mean that its businessmen would be more active in international forums, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the U.N. Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Labor Organization (ILO), as well as the APEC.

Rls.388bn Subsidy for Pharmacentics

Tehran Times Service

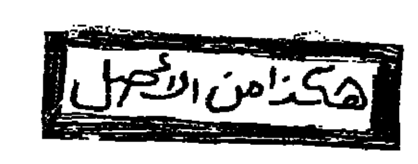
TEHRAN - The Deputy Health Minister in Charge of Pharmaceutics said here Wednesday that Rls.388,000 million will be paid in subsidy to the pharmaceutical industries.

Baqer Larijani told IRNA that this will drastically push down the price of home produced medicine.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

The following table shows the foreign exchange rates in rials as released by the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Wednesday, March 12, 1997.

COUNTRY	UNIT	Floating Rates BUY	Floating Rates SELL	Export Rates BUY	Export Rates SELL
Australia	dollar	1,378	1,386	2,366	2,377
Austria	schilling	145	146	250	251
Belgium	(100) francs	4,965	4,993	8,523	8,566
Canada	dollar	1,279	1,286	2,795	2,206
Denmark	krone	268	270	461	464
France	franc	304	306	521	524
Germany	mark	1,023	1,029	1,757	1,765
Holland	guilder	910	915	1,562	1,570
Italy	(100) liras	103	104	177	178
Japan	(100) yen	1,440	1,448	2,472	2,485
Sweden	krone	230	232	395	397
UAE	dirham	476	479	818	820
UK	pound	2,805	2,821	4,816	4,840
U.S.	dollar	1,750	1,755	3,000	3,015



SPORTS SUMMARY

Tehran Times Service

Football

COLOGNE: *Stuttgart's German international striker Fredi Bobic* went top of the Bundesliga's goalscorers chart on Tuesday scoring a hat-trick in his side's 5-1 demolition of Cologne — their first away win since September 28. Bobic, who took his total to 16 for the season, forced home an equalizer seconds after Cologne's Rico Steinmann had given the home side the lead in the 20th minute and added two more in the 33rd and 86th minutes to send his team into third place. The 25-year-old Bobic's Brazilian strike partner Giovane Elber also got onto the score sheet with his 13th of the season as Cologne ended the match with only 10 men after their sweeper Michael Kostner was sent off in the 65th minute.

LONDON: Leicester city earned their first trip to a cup final at Wembley since 1969 when they beat Wimbledon on away goals after their league cup semi-final ended 1-1 after two legs on Tuesday — their third 'win' over the London side this season. Simon Grayson was Leicester's hero heading home Gary Parker's free-kick in the 53rd minute, after Marcus Gayle had given the 1988 FA Cup Winners, playing their 44th game of the season and their 14th cup tie, the lead in the 23rd minute.

Formula One

IMOLA, Italy: Witnesses gave evidence for the first time here on Tuesday, as the trial resumed into the death of Brazilian racing driver Ayrton Senna at the 1994 San Marino Grand Prix. Six men have been charged with manslaughter after the fatal crash — Senna's team owner Frank Williams, his technical director Patrick Head and chief designer Adrian Newey, along with three race officials. As the trial continued, state prosecutor Maurizio Passarini sought to convince magistrate Antonio Costanzo that Senna's modified steering column had failed under the stress, causing him to veer off the Tamburello curve. But Oreste Dominioni, the lawyer who is defending Williams and has denied the steering broke before the crash, blamed the track's asphalt surface and said it had not been fully investigated.

Rugby Union

LONDON: England coach Jack Rowell has dropped scrum half Andy Gomarsall and promoted Austin Healey to first choice for England's triple crown bid against Wales in Cardiff on Saturday. It is Rowell's first change of the five nations season and gives Healey his second cap after his productive brief spell as a substitute in ireland a month ago. Healey's partner is named as Paul Grayson, though the Northampton stand-off could not train Tuesday as he is recovering from a hip muscle injury. france lose two for Scotland .

CLAIREFONTAINE, France: France will be forced to make at least two changes for their five nations championship grand slam show-down with Scotland here on Saturday. Outside half Alain Penaud, who injured his groin in a club game last weekend, pulled out on Tuesday while tight-head prop Christian Califano was banned after punching an opponent in another club game. Narbonne fly-half Pierre Bondouy was called up from the a side but Penaud is likely to be replaced by Pau's David Aucagne, who made such an impact when he came on as a substitute in the 27-22 win against Wales last month.

Racing

CHELTENHAM, England: The 7/1 chance make a stand trained by Martin Pipe and ridden by champion jockey Tony McCoy led the whole way to win the champion hurdle here on Tuesday — setting a course record of 3 minutes 48.40 seconds. Theatre World, trained by Aidan O'brien in Ireland was five lengths back in second at 33/1 and space trucker, trained also in Ireland by Jessica Harrington was third at 9/2 — leaving the powerful Irish challenge without a winner after the first day of the elite national hunt festival.

Tennis

INDIAN WELLS, California: Mark Philippoussis kept his winning streak going on Tuesday with a first-round victory over 10th-seeded Andre Agassi in the 2.3 million-dollar champions cup. The 20-year-old Australian, who won his second career ATP tour title in Scottsdale, Arizona, on Sunday, outgunned Agassi 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/5).

Badminton

BIRMINGHAM, England: Lin Liwen who caused one of the biggest upsets of last year's all-England badminton event produced another one within three hours of the start of this year's championships at the national indoor arena here on Tuesday. The Norwegian international champion from China narrowly defeated the ninth-seeded Peter Gade Christensen, the Dane who won the Taipei open in January by beating Olympic champion Poul-Erik Hoyer. In contrast to christensen Hoyer, the top seed, made a successful start in his attempt at winning his third successive all England title by beating Dutch man Gerben Bruystens 15-8, 15-2.

Cycling

BOLOGNA, Italy: Fabrizio Furlan, head of the MG technogym team who were fined on Monday after one of their riders failed a blood test, threatened his men with the sack on Tuesday. MG's Mauro Santaromita, who Furlan said will also now be fined by his team, was one of three riders whose blood test on Sunday revealed unusually high haemoglobin levels at the start of the Paris-Nice. The tests had been carried out to deter the use of EPO, or Erythropoietin, a drug produced to treat kidney disease and used to increase oxygen-carrying red blood cell levels which improve endurance.

Make a Stand Wins Champion Hurdle



CHELTENHAM, England — Make A Stand led from start to finish Tuesday to win the 124,000-pounds ($ 198,‾00) champion hurdle on the opening day of the prestigious Cheltenham Festival. The six-year-old Gelding, a 7-1 shot ridden by Tony McCoy, led by 12 lengths at one point and was five lengths clear at the finish of the two-mile (3.2 kilometer) race.

Make A Stand was trainer Martin Pipe's 16th festival winner and third for jockey McCoy.

"This horse is electric," McCoy said. "It's the most improved horse I've ever sat on." Theatre World, a 33-1 shot trained in Ireland and ridden by Aiden O'brien, finished second, 3/4 of a length ahead of Space Trucker, another Irish contender trained by Jessica Harrington and with John Shortt aboard.

Large action, which went off 7-2 favorite and was unbeaten over two miles since losing this race two years ago, was pulled up lame by jockey Jamie Osborne after clearing only two hurdles.

Collier Bay, last year's winner and 4-1 second favorite, was well behind the pack throughout the race and was pulled up by Graham Bradley before reaching the Penultimate fence.

AP

Rain Commits First Cricket Test to Draw

KINGSTON, Jamaica — Rain delayed play until ten minutes before tea Monday and committed the first cricket test between India and the West Indies to a tame draw.

Final scores: West Indies 427 and 241 for four wickets declared, India 346 and 99 for two wickets. An exciting finish was in prospect as the West Indies indicated their intention to declare at their overnight second innings 241 for four wickets.

That would have challenged India to score 323 to win and given the West Indies bowlers at least 90 overs to try to clinch an immediate lead in the series of five tests. Light, but persistent rain, led to an anti-climax.

Although umpires Steve Bucknor and Mervyn Kitchen allowed play to be extended by an hour to make up for some lost time, it was obvious that would make no difference. They agreed to call off play with nine of the last 15 overs remaining.

Although West Indies captain Courtney Walsh dismissed opener Navjot Singh Sidhu to a catch at short-leg without scoring, India were never in any danger.

Opener Venkata Laxman and Rahul Dravid added 62 for the second wicket as Walsh switched his bowlers around, using star batsman Brian Lara in the unfamiliar role of leg-spinner for three overs before Dravid hit him for three fours.

Laxman fell to a catch at cover off fast bowler Franklyn Rose near the end but Dravid remained unbeaten 51 with captain Sachin Tendulkar 15.

Rose, the tall, 25-year-old Jamaican making his test debut, earned the player of the match award. he was judged by former Jamaica and West Indies fast bowler Michel Holding, for his six wickets for 100 on a lifeless pitch in India's first innings.

The second test of the series starts at the Queen's Park Oval in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, on Friday.

AP

Understanding Kung Fu as Described by a Master

By Ja'far Qasimpour Jahangir

Skills of Kung Fu

(Part 30)



A self-confident challenger plans his fighting method knowingly. If you wish to be a skillful challenger, you should enjoy special characteristics and qualities which can be innate or acquired. Speed as an example is an inborn talent. Of course, practice can increase your speed. Speed has different types. Speed of perception means the speed of eyes concerning finding the rival's defenseless part based on his movements. Speed of conception means the ability of your brain in regard to selecting the right skills of attack and counterattack. Speed of action means your ability to put your limbs in motion and increase their speed while in motion. Speed of changing means having the capability to quickly change the direction while performing another technique such as jumping. It is a perplexed feature which consists of various elements including motion, flexibility, firmness, physical fitness and mental alertness, and enough time for recognition and reaction. The more complicated the situation, the slower your reaction. You need the following four factors in order to increase your speed:

1) Warm-up exercises to diminish the viscosity of muscle fibers and increase flexibility
2) Physical fitness
3) Keen hearing and eyesight awareness
4) Fast reaction reflexes

Since the eyesight awareness and speed of perception are not hereditary characteristics, you should acquire them by



uninterrupted exercise. If your perception power is distracted by a slight disturbance, the speed of perception will be reduced. Therefore, you have to have full concentration to acquire the aforesaid qualities. There are some factors which prevent you from acquiring these two characteristics. The important ones are as follows:

1) Being extremely sentimental
2) Fatigue
3) Lack of enough skills
4) Lack of concentration

Meanwhile, you should know that the intentional reactions unlike the instinctive ones require more perception and concentration and your reaction will become slower if you concentrate on more than one issue or action simultaneously because each of them needs full concentration per se.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

RELIGIONS...

ries that the church has left behind during the Medieval ages, Hojjatoleslam Taskhiri said that the bitter memories are being forgotten and the church has rectified its past mistakes.

As for the dialogue between Islam and Christianity, Taskhiri stated that at the beginning of the dialogues Muslims thought that the dialogues pursue political goals rather than religious ones. However, the doubt were gradually removed.

He expressed hope that the two sides enter into negotiations with sincerity to prove that the goal of the dialogues is only to help religious understanding.

Asked about the discussions he had with the head of the Church Universal Council, Dr. Conrade, Hojjatoleslam Taskhiri termed the talks fruitful. Primary steps for convention of a joint commission for holding Islam-Christianity dialogues have been taken.

Elaborating on results of the dialogues, he said that the negotiations have born ample fruits, including deepening religious thought, establishing closer relations with great religious schools, and promoting cooperation among the thinker of the two religions in different fields. The areas of mutual interests include coping with injustice and blasphemy, sovereignty of religious values, confirming the family links, healthy relations between men and women and in general dissemination of morality in the society.

Alluding to the agreements reached on the sidelines of the conference, he said that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and a nongovernmental charity organization which supports the refugees, cosponsored the conference.

The London-based Amar Institute has invited scientific and academic thinkers from 16 countries to attend the 3-day semniar and its roundtables.

Cultural ralations among different nations, the necessity for nagation of cultural domination, women issues and balancing between their activities within and without the house, bringing up the children, problems of the refugees and relations between economy and morality are among the main subjects which were debated during the roundtables.

The Iranian delegation, led by Hojjatoleslam Taskhiri. which was comprised of Dr. Mohsen Khaliji, Fatemeh Hashemi, and Majid Shoaee, actively participated in the roundtables.

Taskhiri said that he had a meeting with Secretary General of UNESCO, Federico Mayor, at the UNESCO headquarters where the two sides agreed on holding Beit-ul-Hekma (house of knowledge) which will be held in Tehran in March 1998 by UNESCO and the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization. The conference will dwell on the role of Muslim translators in advancing cultural goals.

UNESCO is supposed to hold 10 international seminars within two years to help West better understand Islamic civilization. The two-day Tehran conference will be the first in this series.

According to Taskhiri, the publication center of conference will publish several title of books on the subject of the conference.

King Hussein Warns Israel of Storm on Palestinian Horizon

NICOSIA — King Hussein of Jordan warned Israel again Wednesday that violence may erupt in the Palestinian territories because of recent decisions by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government.

"I feel very strongly that things are not moving in the right direction," the monarch said during an interview with Cable News Network (CNN) television monitored in Nicosia.

"We are sliding towards the possibility of despair and extremism that might come with it ... violence," he said.

"The Palestinians seem to be humiliated" by the recent Israeli decision to build a Jewish settlement on the outskirts of disputed East Bait-ul-Moqaddas and to pull back from only nine percent of the territory of the West Bank in the next Israeli redeployment, he said.

"You can't be humiliated without having a reaction," the king added.

The Palestinians have demanded that the next Israeli withdrawal, the first of three set out in the Al-Khalil accord, be from 30 percent of the West Bank, but Israel says it has the right to determine the size of the redeployments.

The Jordanian sovereign said the new situation, created by Israel's decisions, was very dangerous and intolerable.

Bait-ul-Moqaddas' fate, King Hussein said, "is a matter of (final) status negotiations." "We are very very clear in our minds that there should be no change whatsoever in the status quo until such a time as the people discuss it."

"These constant changes are causing a great deal of suspicion and anger and anguish ... and I think that if it happens there's a very strong chance of violence," he said.

(AFP)

Russian Duma Approves Amnesty for Chechnya War Criminals

MOSCOW — The Lower House of the Russian Parliament, the State Duma, passed a law Wednesday granting an amnesty to Chechen separatist fighters and Russian soldiers who committed crimes during the 21-month Chechen conflict.

The amnesty did not cover people found guilty of banditry or terrorism, or repeat offenders.

It excluded the separatists who took part in the mass hostage-taking raids on Budennovsk in June 1995 and Kizlyar in January last year, denounced as terrorist acts by the Russian authorities.

The raids were led by Shamil Basayev and Salman Raduyev. Basayev was runner-up in Chechnya's presidential elections in January.

The amnesty law halted legal procedures against Chechens held in Russian prisons who were due to be exchanged for Russians held prisoner.

It also covered Russian soldiers who deserted during the conflict.

The amnesty did not require approval from the Upper House, or Federation Council, or from President Boris Yeltsin. It goes into effect once it is officially published.

(AFP)

Turkey Urges Iraqi Kurds to Pursue Peace Talks

ANKARA — Turkey urged rival Iraqi Kurd factions on Wednesday to resume their peace talks, a day after the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) announced it was pulling out because of the assassination of a party member.

The KDP, led by Massud Barzani, said Tuesday it would no longer take part in the U.S. and Turkish-sponsored talks with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) after one of its senior officials was slain.

KDP deputy leader Sami Abderrahman made the announcement at a press conference after the KDP leader in the town of Halabja, Mouhiddin Rahim, was assassinated on Tuesday in Arbil, the main city in Iraqi Kurdistan.

"We want the peace process to continue without interruption despite this regrettable incident," Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Sermet Atacanli told reporters.

"The two other countries also wish to see the peace process continue," he added, referring to the United States and Britain.

They will meet within the next few days to carry out an investigation, the Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

Abderrahman said the KDP "will not attend any meeting until an investigation is carried out into the assassination by the peace makers, namely the United States, United Kingdom and Turkey, and the results are declared."

Representatives from the United States, Turkey, Britain, the Turcomans — the third largest minority in Iraqi Kurdistan after Arabs and Kurds — and the KDP and PUK are taking part in the peace talks here.

(AP)

Kidnapped Germans Released

SAN'A – Seven German tourists kidnapped in eastern Yemen have been released and are expected to arrive here later Wednesday, a senior police official said.

The official, who asked not to be named, told AFP the Germans had arrived in Mukalla and were to be flown to the Yemeni capital by the national carrier and then back to Germany later the same day on a Lufthansa flight.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

VELAYATI...

the resolution of European countries on Palestine at the UN Security Council.

Velayati arrived here on a 2-day visit on Tuesday on the third leg of his 10-nation tour. He earlier visited Syria and Turkey where he submitted messages of President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to President Hafez al-Assad and President Suleyman Demirel inviting them to the summit meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), to be held in Tehran in December. (IRNA)

Syrian President Meets Armenian FM

DAMASCUS — Syrian President Hafez al-Assad held talks with Armenian Foreign Minister Alexander Arzumanian here Wednesday, officials said.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shara attended the meeting, officials in the president's office said. They declined to disclose what was discussed.

Syrian Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zohbi met Arzumanian on Tuesday.

The official SANA news agency said they discussed "bilateral relations, the situation in Central Asia and the Arab territories occupied (by Israel)."

Relations between Syria and Armenia are good and the two countries signed an economic cooperation agreement in 1993.

The Armenian diplomat is scheduled to leave Syria on Thursday for Lebanon.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

DEVELOPMENT..

in his agenda. Moreover in country like Iran where Islamic teachings are the main guidelines of officials, theories such as Trickle Down have no application. Hence, the next president should make sure that all strata would be beneficiaries of the development process.

Unlike the industrialized societies, where taxes are the main source of the government revenues, in Iran, an oil producing country, government relies on the oil revenues as the mainstay of economy: Oil is the main source of our national wealth. Our oil revenues should be spent for the welfare of all the citizens.

Iran's foreign policy is another issue that should be given its due weight by the next president. Of course our foreign policy stems from our constitution.

However, given the fact that the world is not going to be a unipolar one as most of the U.S. politicians envisaged in post-Cold War era, the next president should concentrate on regional cooperation and expand cooperation with Europe, Russia, Japan as well as Asian and African countries.

(Contd From Pg.)

MP...

Baku are being tried on no charge but being a Muslim," Harisi said.

The MP pointed out that relations among Muslims across the world are a spiritual and ideological relationships, and accusing them of treason and spying is an insult to Islam and all world Muslims who will never forget this insult.

Rulers in Baku have accommodated the enemies of Islam: the U.S. and Israel, in the house of Muslims and get permission from them in order to try the Muslims and issue their death warrants, Harisi said.

"We demand the rulers of Baku to stop harassing and killing the Muslims return to the bossom of Islam, preserve respect and good neighborliness with Islamic Iran, contribute to the promotion and dignity of Islam and Muslims and release Muslims from the Baku prisons.

"Otherwise, the Muslim people of Iran and, especially the Muslims of Azarbaijan will urge the government of Iran to pursue Iran's territorial claims as testified by conclusive historical evidence, through international tribunal retrieving the lands and relieving the Muslims of the wretched conditions they are suffering in Azerbaijan.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

UN...

issues out of the United Nations.

The United States rebuffed Israeli attempts Wednesday to keep foreign governments from an international conference in Gaza which Palestinians hope will add pressure on the Zionist state to back off a series of controversial decisions.

Foreign Minister David Levy met with the U.S. ambassador to Israel, Martin Indyk, in Bait-ul-Moqaddas to argue that the international conference convened by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat for Saturday violates the Oslo peace accords.

Arafat called the meeting over Israel's refused to cancel plans to build a large new Jewish enclave in disputed East Bait-ul-Moqaddas or to include more than a small portion of occupied territory in its next scheduled troop withdrawal from the West Bank.

"This act is against the (peace) agreements (and) could have a negative impact on the peace process," Levy said after an hour-long meeting with Indyk.

But Indyk rejected the Israeli view and said Washington would attend the conference alongside representatives from Russia, the European Union, Egypt, Japan and Jordan.

"We are going to the meeting," he said, adding that the U.S. consul general in Bait-ul-Moqaddas, Edward Abington, would represent Washington.

"We regard this as a briefing on Arafat's concerns about the peace process. We do not see it as an alternative forum in any way whatsoever to the process of direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians," he said.

Eytan Bentsur, the number two official at Israel's Foreign Ministry, said the ministry had launched a campaign via its representatives abroad to discourage other countries from attending the Gaza meeting.

Arafat called the international meeting after negotiations with Israel broke down on Sunday over the East Bait-ul-Moqaddas plan and further redeployments of Israeli troops in the West Bank.

His move came as part of a broader diplomatic initiative which included a UN General Assembly debate which was due to begin Wednesday and expected to yield a resolution critical of Israel's settlement policies. (AP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

INDIAN...

He gave no further details of the agenda for the talks.

India and Pakistan, who have fought three wars since their independence in 1947, have not held official talks since 1994.

Their relationship has been blighted by an ownership dispute over the Himalayan territory of Kashmir.

The premiers' meeting will take place after clear-the-air negotiations between the neighbors' foreign secretaries, who are due to meet here from March 28-31.

Analysts, however, have cast cold water over those initial talks after Nawaz Sharif said that progress on the Kashmir issue was crucial before discussing other issues such as trade, while Deve Gowda argued that the territory was an integral part of India.

Since then, however, officials from both countries have attempted to tone down their statements on the talks.

Kumar Gujral said he would not discuss the foreign secretaries' meeting because he did not want to kill off the talks before they had begun.

The last summit between the leaders of India and Pakistan took place in late 1989 when former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto met late Indian premier Rajiv Gandhi in Islamabad, also during a SAARC conference.

(AFP)

(Contd From Pg. 1)

SERBS...

UN spokesman in the nearby town of Tuzla, Andrea Angeli, said there were no casualties in the attack at 6 p.m. (1700 GMT)

Gajevi was placed off-limits to all but official visitors by SFOR last week after a Serb mob destroyed Muslim houses being built there.

On Tuesday, the day after the end of the SFOR operation, an unarmed mob of between 30 and 50 civilians managed to get inside the village and set fire to the remaining house, said SFOR spokesman Major Andrew Saddleton.

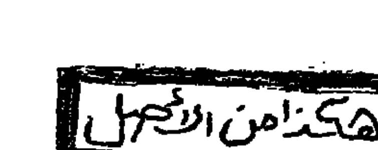
He said Russian troops stationed near the village were unaware that the mob was attacking until they saw the flames from the house.

"The last prefabricated house in Gajevi was burned down by a crowd of people," said Major Saddleton. "There were no SFOR troops present until after the incident took place."

Gajevi lies in northeast Bosnia in Serb-held territory near the former Serb-Muslim front-line, and was picked by the United Nations at the beginning of this year for a high-profile operation to return Muslim refugees to their former homes.

The attack is the third on the village this year, and comes despite repeated condemnations by the senior international mediator in Bosnia, high representative Carl Bildt, and repeated promises by Serb leaders to halt the attacks.

(AFP)



U.S. Urges Europe to Get Serious on Stamping Out Bribery

WASHINGTON — A senior U.S. official on Tuesday charged that Europe was dragging its feet on moves to stamp out the payment of bribes to win foreign contracts, citing France and Germany in particular.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Alan Larson, addressing a seminar at the European institute here, said momentum was building toward action by the industrialized world to end the practice of paying bribes to secure contracts from foreign officials.

In particular, Washington is looking for a concrete commitment against foreign bribery from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development at its May ministerial meeting in Paris.

But Larson said several European countries, notably France and Germany, were unwilling to take domestic action to criminalize foreign bribery in the absence of an international convention.

"In my view, this is a dodge," Larson argued. "an international convention could take years to complete and would still become effective only after enactment of domestic laws punishing foreign bribery."

Noting that the United States passed antibribery legislation nearly 20 years ago, he said: "It is past time for Europe to act as well."

Larson also urged members of the European Union to expand measures to eliminate the tax deductibility of foreign bribes.

While the union is about to criminalize bribery among its own members, he said such sanctions should be broadened.

"Should EU businesses be immune from prosecution — and receive a tax deduction — if they bribe a Brazilian or American official?" he asked. (AFP)

Jakarta Postpones First Nuclear Power Plant Until 2020

JAKARTA — Indonesia will delay the construction of its first nuclear power plant to at least 2020, following the discovery of alternative energy sources, reports said Wednesday.

Research and Technology Minister Jusuf Habibie said the original plan, that forecast a plant to start in 2003, were made 20 years ago, before the finding of new energy sources, the *Bisnis Indonesia* daily reported.

"Right now, we have an oversupply of electricity. Because of that our energy plans have to be revised," Habibie told an environment and energy conference here Tuesday.

He said a nuclear power plant would be "impossible" for 2003 but added that it might be needed by "2020 or 2030."

Last month demonstrations were held outside Parliament and as a draft bill on nuclear energy was passed. The bill will become law once President Suharto signs it.

The new law allows for a non-government consultative body to be formed to advise on the building of a nuclear power plant. The private sector will also be allowed to take part in nuclear power development.

Environmentalists and a number of academics have opposed the planned building of a nuclear plant, claiming the final decision should be taken by the public.

Habibie said the bill was intended to make nuclear power the "last priority" since construction of a nuclear plant would cost over 35 trillion rupiah (14.52 billion dollars).

Habibie has previously been a staunch supporter of the use of nuclear energy for Indonesia.

Research and preparation to build an 1,800 megawatt nuclear plant on the slopes of the Muria volcano on the northern coast of densely populated central Java started around two years ago.

It would be the first of 12 nuclear power plants in central Java with a total power generating capacity of 7,000 megawatts.

Governments and nuclear companies from Canada, Japan and the United States are lobbying to supply nuclear technology. (AFP)

Nepal's New Coalition Promises to Fight Corruption

KATHMANDU — Nepal's new governing coalition linking a center-right prime minister and former communist foes pledged on Tuesday to fight corruption and end political instability.

The new coalition government will take institutional and various other practical measures to bring corruption, financial irregularities and smuggling under control, the three-party coalition said in a statement, read on Radio Nepal.

Lokendra Bahadur Chand of the Rashtriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) was to be sworn in later on Tuesday as the Himalayan kingdom's fifth prime minister since multiparty democracy was established in 1990.

A splinter faction of the RPP led by Chand has allied with the communist Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML) party and the centrist Nepal Sadbhavana Party (NSP).

The new coalition will put an end to the confusion and uncertainty and bring about political stability, the statement said.

Chand, 57, served twice as prime minister under the Panchayat system of partyless government which lasted from 1961 to 1990 and was fiercely opposed by the communists.

King Birendra bowed to bloody pro-democracy demonstrations in 1990 and put an end to his absolute powers, replacing them with a Westminster-style constitutional monarchy. Many of the Panchayat leaders later assembled under the RPP's banner.

Chand's RPP faction joined hands with the communists and the NSP last week to topple Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, who had headed a three-party coalition led by his centrist Nepali Congress and including the RPP for 17 months.

Deuba's government was undermined by charges of corruption and the RPP's allegations that Nepali Congress dominated the coalition. Deuba resigned last Thursday but has stayed on as caretaker prime minister.

The UML had held power from November 1994, when inconclusive general elections were held, until September 1995 when Deuba engineered the communists' downfall.

The communists, the biggest single party with 90 seats in the 205-member Lower House of Parliament, were expected to dominate the new coalition.

Chand has said he controls 10 of the RPP's 19 votes, while the NSP has two seats. One lawmaker from the communist Nepal Workers and Peasants Party (NWPP) has pledged to support the coalition, giving it 103 votes in the House of Representatives — just enough to survive.

The absence of any majority party in the badly divided Parliament which emerged from the 1994 elections, and parties' unwillingness to hold fresh elections have forced the RPP and UML to put aside their long-standing differences and ally.

The next general election is not scheduled until November 1999.

Nepal, which maintained self-imposed isolation until the middle of the century, is one of the world's 10 poorest nations with an annual average income of 200 a head. (Reuter)

Talks Between Bangladesh Government, Tribals Set to Resume

DHAKA — Another round of peace talks was set to begin in Dhaka Wednesday between the Bangladesh government and tribal leaders from the southeastern hills.

The talks were be led by parliamentary chief Abhul Hasnat Abdullah and Jatindra Buddhipriyo Larma of the Parbatya Chattagram Janasanghati Samity (PCJSS), the political wing of the rebel Shanti Bahini (peace force).

The breakthrough in the peace process came Sunday after the tribal leaders sheltered in neighboring India's Tripura state, and a government team sealed a package deal for resuming repatriation of refugees to their homes after a two-year break.

Official sources said Wednesday's talks were to focus on the kind of autonomy to be given to the three hill districts of Bandarban, Khagrachari and Rangamati, land rights and fate of Bengali-speaking Muslim settlers.

Military troops and police enforced a tight security in the 14,200-square-kilometer (5,680-square-mile) in the face of a general strike.

The strike was called by the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its traditional ally the Jamaat-e-Islami Party along with the Parbatyo Bangalee Gano Parishad, representing the settlers.

Both the BNP and Parishad claimed the peace talks would "go against the interest" of the settlers.

Local residents said by telephone the Parishad members, who are demanding the inclusion of their representatives in the talks, staged protest marches, but the situation was calm.

The PCJSS leaders were expected to fly into Dhaka later Wednesday by a military helicopter and put up at the state guest house, where the talks would be held. No deadline has been set for the parleys.

Two BNP leaders are part of the government team, but they abstained during the first round of talks in Dhaka in January.

A joint declaration issued by the government and Parbatya Chattagram Jumma Sharanarthy Kalyan Samity (PCJSKS), representing refugees in India's Tripura state, said Monday that under the agreement repatriation would resume March 28 with 5,000 tribals in the first batch.

Some 50,000 Bangladeshi tribals are camped in Tripura.

Hundreds of tribesmen fled Bangladesh in 1986 when hostilities broke out and some 2,500 people have been killed in the jungle war.

The Shanti Bahini, set up in 1973 and mostly dominated by the Chakma tribe, has been demanding autonomy and expulsion of the settlers from the region. (AFP)

Bhutto Wants to Quit Party Leadership

ISLAMABAD — Former Premier Benazir Bhutto has said she would urge her Pakistan People's Party to choose a new leader despite being named by the party as lifelong president, it was reported Wednesday.

She told reporters she had played her role in politics and she was not aspiring to return to power or work as opposition leader, the *Dawn* newspaper reported.

Bhutto made the statement in Lahore a day after a high-level PPP meeting in Islamabad endorsed her as the party's president for life.

The paper quoted Bhutto as saying that despite the party's decision she would try to persuade it to choose an alternative leadership.

Monday's PPP meeting in Islamabad also decided to reorganize the party at various levels and a spokesman said new nominations for different offices including the post of secretary general would be announced in April.

Refusing to name a person who could replace her as leader of the party, Bhutto said "I don't know who will win the hearts of the people."

The 30-year old party, launched in 1967 by her late father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was routed in the February 3 elections by the Pakistan Muslim League, led by Nawaz Sharif, who subsequently became prime minister.

She said the new prime minister had not taken any step against her family which could be termed as victimization.

Bhutto, who offered cooperation to Sharif after the electoral defeat, said she would like to give him time to work.

She dismissed suggestions that her intended low-profile was a move aimed at securing the release of her jailed husband Asif Ali Zardari, who faces trial on charges of involvement in the murder of her borther Murtaza.

The former premier said she believed that Allah would accept her prayers and Zardari would get justice along with other "innocent" people under arrest.

Several police officials and a former Intelligence Bureau chief are also in jail in the Murtaza murder case.

Murtaza was killed in a police shootout in Karachi on September 20 while Bhutto was still in power. (AFP)

NATO Chief Explains Expansion Plans to Central Asian Nations

ALMATY, Kazakhstan — NATO chief Javier Solana, campaigning among Russian allies in Central Asia, met Kazakhstan's president Tuesday to allay fears about the alliance's eastward expansion.

Solana said NATO intended to expand contacts with Kazakhstan and other countries in the region as part of the partnership for peace program.

"We are going to cooperate in a much broader sense through this program," Solana told reporters after the meeting with President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Military exercises are set for southern Kazakhstan in September.

They will include forces from the host country as well as Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and the United States.

The former Soviet republics seek closer relations with NATO while also maintaining warm ties with Russia, which adamantly opposes the alliance's plans to move into Eastern Europe.

Solana's Central Asian tour includes visits to the four countries that are members of both NATO's partnership for peace program and the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States.

Nazarbayev had said earlier this month that NATO shouldn't rush with its expansion plans.

But Solana reiterated his assurances that Russia's fears of NATO's expansion are ungrounded.

"I do not think that NATO is a threat to anybody," Solana said. "NATO is an organization of 16 democratic countries, and 16 democratic countries cannot be a threat to anybody."

"There may be misconceptions," he said. "We still have too many images of the past, but the NATO of '97 has little to do with the NATO of 1960s," Solana said.

He said that NATO and Russia seemed to be headed toward reaching a mutually acceptable relationship, but some differences remain.

NATO has offered to negotiate a special charter with Russia, setting out a new relationship and providing security guarantees.

Russia wants the document to be legally binding. The alliance has said the document should be "politically" binding in order to avoid the need for ratification by all 16 NATO parliaments as well as the hard-line Russian legislature. (AP)

Colombian FM Urges Foreigners to Avoid Parts of the Country

BOGOTA — Foreign Minister Maria Emma Mejia Monday urged foreigners visiting Colombia to avoid certain regions, warning that they could become kidnap targets.

The warning came after a Norwegian employee of the Swedish construction group Skanska was reported kidnapped Monday while in the country on vacation.

Stein Vatne, 46, left his workplace in the town of Urra on February 20 and was heading by car to Ecuador to join his wife and child. But he has not been heard of since then, his employer said.

The Norwegian daily *Verdens Gang* reported Monday that the guerrilla group Eln had kidnapped Vatne.

"They do it for ransom. And we are hopeful that he will be released," Skanska representative Bernt Nilsson told the paper.

Mejia reminded diplomats working in Colombia that three other foreigners have recently been kidnapped and killed in two separate cases.

On March 7 authorities found the body of Russian Vassili Lojkine in the Uraba region near the Panama border. He had been missing for one year after bicycling into Colombia on a round-the-world trip.

Investigators believe guerrillas killed Lojkine thinking he was a mercenary hired to train paramilitary soldiers.

On March 4 a German, Alexander Scheurer, and an Austrian, Johann Kehrer, were killed by guerrillas when the army surprised the rebels in a jungle area in the Department of Choco, on the Pacific coast.

Their travel companions Austrian Manfred Kehrer and German Mardian Muzinic were freed unharmed.

The four Europeans were captured February 7 by rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) who had demanded 15 million dollars ransom. It is illegal in Colombia to pay ransom to kidnappers.

The Monday kidnapping led to a tightening of security routines at the Urra work site. Employees are now transported by plane or helicopter to and from the site and the nearest town, Monteria, and more stringent traveling rules have been enforced. (AFP)

Blushing Bride Turns Out to Be Transvestite

JAKARTA — Tongues are wagging in the tiny northern Indonesian town of Samarinda at the news that a blushing bride at a lavish wedding was hiding a dark secret — she was in fact a he, The Jakarta Post said Wednesday.

Hundreds of guests turned out to wish the happy couple well when the 18-year-old son of a family in the east Kalimantan town married, even though some sniggered because the bride was more than twice his age.

Then the gossip was confirmed, the bride was in fact a 36-year-old transvestite. (AFP)

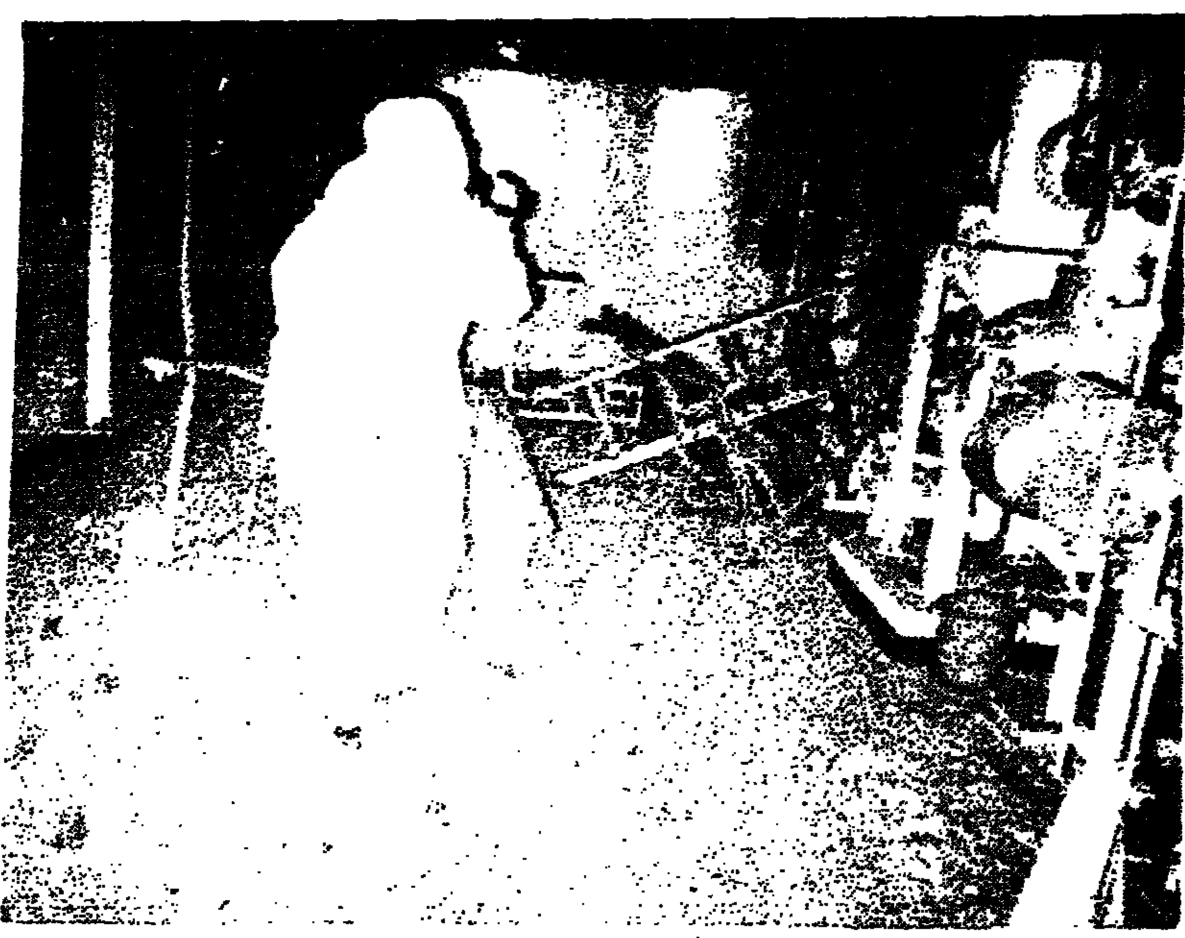
Border-Jumper Eaten by Crocodile

HARARE — A young Zimbabwean woman has been killed by crocodiles while trying to enter South Africa illegally, police reported Wednesday, highlighting the desperation of the region's army of border-jumpers.

Zimbabwean police divers called off the search for the body of 25-year-old Sibongile Moyo in the Limpopo River, which forms the border between the two countries, suggesting that they believed she had been eaten.

Moyo's boyfriend told police that he saw her attacked by more than one crocodile as she tried to cross the river last Thursday. (AFP)

35 Workers Exposed in Japan Nuclear Plant Fire



TOKAI, Japan (March 11): An investigator of the Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corp. inspects the scene of the explosion at the bituminzation facility in the nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in the village of Tokai, Ibaraki Prefecture, some 100 km (62 miles) northeast of Tokyo. The fire at the plant caused leak of radioactivity, Premier Ryutaro Hashimoto said 12 March.

(AFP PHOTO)

TOKYO – The Japanese state nuclear company faced a storm of criticism Wednesday after a fire and an explosion at a reprocessing plant exposed 35 workers to radiation.

The state-run Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corp. (Donen) was condemned over its reaction to the Tokai Plant alert and the health risks it raised. Donen said 35 workers at the plant in Inabaki prefecture, 115 kilometers (70 miles) northeast of Tokyo, were exposed to "very low level" radiation which a company official said posed "no health risk."

He said the radiation levels found were "less than one-thousandth of the annual permissible radiation exposure level."

The fire broke out on Tuesday. It was quickly extinguished, the company said, but was followed some 10 hours later by an explosion.

Donen said an investigation had been started, but official attacks on its actions soon started. Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto voiced displeasure at Donen's handling of the radiation leak.

Two workers were stuck on the roof of the plant for five hours after the fire and Donen waited two and a half hours to tell the fire brigade, the Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS) reported.

The television station said the company finally had to get a crane to rescue the two workers on the roof of the four-story building after the fire. It showed pictures taken from a helicopter of the two men on the building.

Tirefighters interviewed by TBS said it took two and a half hours for the fire department to be told. (AFP)

Zairean Premier Vows Kisangani "Won't Fall"

KISANGANI, Zaire — Zairean Army Forces were reported Wednesday to have killed 35 rebels in a clash outside the provincial capital of Kisangani, as Prime Minister Kengo Wa Dondo vowed the city will not fall.

"We will defend Kisangani, which has become the central point of the war," Kengo said in a meeting with the press in Kinshasa.

He refused to speculate on what would happen if the rebels, who are advancing on Kisangani from several fronts, took control of Kisangani, which is Zaire's third largest city, the government's headquarters in its battle against the uprising and a key economic hub.

"That is a hypothesis that I do not envisage," he said. "Kisangani will not fall."

Kengo's comments came as reliable sources reported that the army had killed 35 rebel troops in a clash about 80 kilometers (50 miles) away from Kisangani. The lighting occurred Tuesday afternoon on the road towards Bafwsende, to the northeast, which has been the scene of frequent clashes between rebel and government forces for the past month with neither side able to establish final control.

(AFP)

Vlore Reacts Cautiously to New Albanian PM

VLORE, Albania — Nervous residents of Vlore, epicenter of the Albanian uprising, reacted cautiously Wednesday to news from Tirana of a new government to defuse the latest Balkans crisis.

Many insisted that the real solution lay in the resignation of President Sali Berisha and compensation for savings lost in fraudulent investment schemes.

"We are happy that Albania has a new prime minister, but we don't know who this person is," a spokesman for the local "Salvation Committee" in this southern Adriatic port of 80,000 people, the biggest city in the south.

"We are asking for contact with the prime minister, but we think that the government should make contact with us first," he said.

Berisha, resisting pressure to stand down, agreed with opposition leaders Tuesday to name Bashkim Fino, a 35-year-old economist, as prime minister of a new multi-party government.

Fino is little known outside the opposition Socialist Party, to which he belongs. But in 1992-96 he was mayor of another southern town, Gjirokaster, another town that the government in Tirana no longer controls, in an uprising that has taken in a quarter of Albania.

On Tuesday, four representatives from Vlore went to Gjirokaster to meet other southern leaders, but there was no comment on what the outcome, if any, of the talks had been.

In Vlore itself, the situation seemed stable — in contrast to the growing tension reported in Tirana. (AFP)

Irish President Mary Robinson Says She Will Not Seek Second Term

DUBLIN, Ireland — Mary Robinson, Ireland's first woman president, announced Wednesday that she will not seek a second seven-year term.

The announcement ended months of speculation about her future in the Irish government, but raised fresh speculation about whether she plans to step onto the international stage in a top job with the United Nations.

Mrs. Robinson has scored consistently high ratings in opinion polls and would almost certainly have been unopposed if she had sought a second term.

She has been mentioned as a candidate to become UN commissioner for human rights, a post which unexpectedly became vacant recently when Jose Ayalo Lasso decided to return home to become Ecuador's foreign minister.

Mrs. Robinson's statement gave no indication of her future plans, saying only that she believed a new president should lead Ireland into the new millennium.

"It has been a difficult decision for me and I have, with great reluctance, decided not to seek a second term in office," she said.

The 52-year-old president was a feminist lawyer when she won election in 1990 with 52 percent of the vote. (AP)

King Swears In New PM Ending Nepal Political Crisis

KATHMANDU — Nepal's King Birendra Wednesday approved the new coalition government led by rightwing Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand with communist allies, ending a six-day political crisis in this Himalayan kingdom.

The king administered the oath of office to Chand, 58, at a simple function at the royal palace attended by high-level government officials, military and police personnel, state radio said.

After taking the oath of office, Chand then swore in his seven appointed cabinet colleagues.

The new coalition government is composed of the rightist National Democratic Party (NDP), the Nepal Communist Party-United Marxist and Leninist (NCP-UML) and the pro-India Nepal Sadbhavana Party (NSP).

The Nepal Workers' and Peasants' Party (NWPP), with only one MP in Parliament, while supporting the government will not be part of the coalition.

Chand has been prime minister twice before under the so-called partyless Panchayat system when King Birendra ruled with almost absolute authority. (AFP)

Violence, Gunbattle Mar Zulu March in Johannesburg

JOHANNESBURG — A brief but fierce gunbattle erupted in central Johannesburg Wednesday between police and demonstrators during a day of Zulu nationalist protests that left at least two people dead.

At least two were seriously wounded — one of them could be seen lying bloodied and motionless on the pavement — as shots were exchanged at the downtown library gardens, an AFP correspondent reported from the scene.

The gunbattle began after some members of a crowd of about 13,000 pulled out firearms and started shooting volleys in the air — they then turned their weapons on the police, who returned fire.

Officers arrested at least two people at the park just outside the city hall.

(AFP)



JAKARTA, Indonesia (March 12): Indonesian President Suharto bangs a gong to mark the opening of the First ASEAN Business Summit, as Indonesian tycoon Aburizal Bakrie (L) and Coordinating Minister for Production and Distribution Hartarto Sastrosunarto (C) look on. The summit is intended to foster cooperation between the private sector of member states facing an era of global trade.

(AFP PHOTO)

German Builders See Slump Continuing, Costing Jobs

BONN — German construction investment should fall another 2.5% this year, forcing 10% of contractors into bankruptcy and adding to the country's jobs crisis, the ZDB Builders' Association said on Monday.

Investment in the building sector, which accounts for about 10% of the German economy, dropped 2.7% last year.

Losses plus lower sales and orders should remain the rule at least until the second half of this year, ZDB President Fritz Eichbauer told a news conference.

About 7,000 building workers protested on Monday against mass unemployment in the sector by stopping work on Berlin's Potsdamer Platz, where a towering forest of cranes overlook Europe's largest construction site.

The IG Bau Union said construction workers would hold a vigil all week at the Brandenburg Gate.

Construction Minister Klaus Toepfer said last year's 6.8% decline in public construction investment had amplified the industry downturn and had to be stopped.

The government would be looking harder at possibilities for private financing of public works projects such as water treatment plants, which can cut costs sharply, Toepfer said.

Thousands of coal miners fearing for their jobs also grabbed headlines by blocking Bonn's main thoroughfare on Monday. But Eichbauer said the employment outlook in the construction sector was even bleaker. The construction industry will shed more jobs this year than there are coal miners in all of Germany, he said.

Construction employment was likely to fall to 900,000 by the end of the decade from 1.3 million today, he said, a trend that ran counter to the government's goal of halving unemployment in the same period.

He estimated that 400,000 workers in the highly seasonal industry were out of work in January, when a 25% month-on-month decline in construction output was the main reason behind a 1.7% fall in industrial production.

Bad weather, changes to winter payments for idle workers and the lapsing of tax incentives for construction in east Germany were cited as the main reasons for the January slump.

About 150,000 of those construction workers might now be back at work but by the end of March unemployment in the sector would still be 200,000 to 250,000. The industry should show a net 90,000 decline in jobs this year, he said.

There are fewer than 100,000 hard-coal miners in Germany.

Eichbauer estimated that 7,000 of germany's 70,000 building contractors could go bust this year as building prices fell another 2%.

ZDB, which represents construction industry employers, projected building investment would fall by 2% in western Germany this year and 4% in the east.

Even the construction of new government buildings in Berlin could not outweigh a slackening of momentum from German unification and reconstruction of the former communist region.

Investment in housing would fall by 2.5%, in commercial construction by 2% and in the public sector by 3%, the ZDB said.

Eichbauer called on the government to boost public spending on construction. As bright spots of latent demand, he said 50 billion marks ($29.3 billion) in investment was needed for energy conservation measures in public buildings and 30 billion marks for remodelling railway stations.

But he acknowledged that government at all levels was under pressure to slash spending and reduce deficits. Germany aims to reduce its budget deficit this year to 3% of total economic output to qualify for European Monetary Union.

Eichbauer forecast that the industry could be back on the upswing next year or the year after but might never again see the surges of demand it experienced periodically in Germany's postwar and even post-unification history.

Still, a long-term forecast by the respected IFO Economic Research Institute, showing average 0.3% growth in the construction sector through to 2006, was too pessimistic, he said.

Eichbauer said the industry would be forced to reduce sick pay as the law now allowed and was not in a position to offer wage rises that kept pace even with Germany's current low level of inflation.

(Reuter)

Talk of Single Currency Delay Gathers Pace





BRUSSELS — Speculation that the launch of Europe's single currency could be delayed grew on Monday as doubts emerged from Germany and Italy over the readiness of some countries to meet economic targets for membership by the planned start in 1999.

One of Germany's leading economists, Herbert Hax, called over the weekend for a delay in Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), arguing that Bonn would in all likelihood miss the tough entry rules on budget deficits and debt.

Bundesbank Council member Klaus-Dieter Kuehbacher, echoing such pessimism, said he doubted the German government would reach its goal of bringing its 1997 budget deficit down to 2.9% of gross domestic product (GDP).

In remarks made on Monday, however, he stopped short of suggesting a delay to EMU, saying such a development would be a major setback to government efforts to consolidate their budgets.

Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini added to the speculative mill with weekend remarks that he did not rule out a delay to the decision on which countries would qualify for the single currency.

British Prime Minister John Major also said on Monday he would be prepared to vote against other European Union countries joining a single currency if they were not ready.

Hax, head of the influential five wise men that advises the German government, told a German newspaper that Bonn should put off joining the single currency until its own finances were in order.

The truth is quite simple. Stability comes before the timetable, Hax said.

Struggling under the weight of record unemployment and its associated costs, Germany has seen its budget projections called into question for 1997, the critical year on which countries will be judged whether they qualify for EMU.

Governments must bring their budget deficits down to the equivalent of 3% of overall economic output in 1997 if they wish to join.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, standing firm against the rising tide of EMU pessimism, stuck to his argument on Saturday that Germany would fulfil the economic convergence criteria for EMU and the common currency would be launched as planned in 1999.

Although most economists still expect monetary union to go ahead on schedule, uncertainty over Germany's economic performance has introduced an element of caution.

A lot hinges on whether we will see a drop in (German) unemployment in the spring, said Thomas Mayer, economist at Goldman Sachs in Frankfurt.

Many economists expect Germany's jobs outlook, distorted by severe weather earlier this winter, to brighten, which would rekindle confidence in a timely start to EMU.

At the moment, however, the chance of a postponement has concentrated the minds of European currency and bond markets.

Speaking to reporters at the end of a weekend conference in Venice, Dini said: Towards the end of the year we will be in a position to see whether the decisions on which countries will participate from the start will need to be put back a bit.

EU leaders are expected to decide on which countries qualify in the early part of next year.

Among the various delay scenarios speculated on in financial markets, two have gained particular currency.

One sees EU finance ministers taking advantage of a supposed loophole in the Maastricht Treaty that would allow a later start date, such as January 1, 2001.

A second, and possibly more contentious option, would be to let EMU go ahead in 1999 as an empty shell with none of the EU's 15 member nations actually joining until they had met the economic criteria.

EU Monetary officials say both strategies are inconsistent with the workings of the Maastricht Treaty, with one official calling the second option ludicrous.

You cannot decide on a delay without knowledge of the participants, said the official. Both in the spirit and the letter of the treaty, this option does not exist.

Most observers believe a credible delay for EMU, should it be necessary, would be decided later this year and require EU leaders to renegotiate Maastricht.

(Reuter)

GE Eyes UAE Jet Deal in Offset Venture

ABU DHABI — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) announced on Tuesday a new offset project involving the U.S. aircraft maker Ggeneral Eelectric, which is hoping to win part of a multi-billion-dollar jet deal.

The new project, Solex Robotics Services LLC, is a joint venture between a local group and the Houston-based Solex Environmental Services.

Deputy Chairman of the UAE Offsets Group (UOG), Mohammed Al-Mazrui, said General Electric had arranged for the creation of the venture and would work with Solex and UOG to support the operations of the company.

"It is a pre-offset venture arranged by gEneral Electric. It could be hoping to win some deals in the UAE, like the engines for the aircraft which will be purchased by the UAE air force," Mazrui told reporters.

He did not elaborate on the jet deal but the UAE, a major oil producer, is believed to be seeking up to 80 fighters worth nearly six billion dollars.

It will be the country's biggest ever single aircraft package, part of its plans to bolster its defense capability. The UAE's largest jet deal was struck with France in early 1980 and it involved 36 Mirage fighters.

France is again competing with the United States to win the new contract, with three major French aicraft and arms producers announcing the opening of an office in Abu Dhabi this week after entering into an alliance. They are Dassault Aviation, SNECMA and Thomson-CSF.

The latest U.S. offset project involves marketing a new system used in the inspection of oil tanks. The state-of-the-art robotics system, called Maverick, has been developed by Solex in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Energy, UOG said.

"Maverick, an advanced technology, remotely-operated robot, collects corrosion data from the interior walls and bottom of tanks with a refined product while they remain in service," a statement said.

"As a result, operators can inspect for leakage without taking their tanks offline, draining inventory, cleaning the interior and disposing of waste."

Solex owns 49% of the project's capital of two million dollars while the rest is controlled by the local Al-Mansuri oil services firm.

Don Hartsell of Solex said the system would be marketed within four months for the first time in the world. He expected strong demand for the machine, which he said reduces inspection costs by nearly two thirds.

Hartsell estimated there are more than 5,000 oil tanks in the six-nation (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council [(P)GCC)] and Yemen and the costs of traditional inspection services for them are nearly $170 million. The new system has been successfully tested by Exxon, Mobil and Shell, he added.

Mazrui later told AFP there were now nearly 20 offset ventures in the UAE with investments of around 1.3 billion dirhams ($354 million).

Under offset programs introduced by the UAE five years ago, arms suppliers must re-invest in local civilian projects that are likely to produce a turnover of 60% of the package's value in a specific period of time.

(AFP)

Malaysia, Morocco Sign Agreement Aimed At Expanded Trade

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — Morocco and Malaysia signed an agreement Monday aimed at expanding the trade between them, which Malaysia's trade minister called too small.

Driss Jettou, Morocco's minister of commerce, industry and handicraft, who signed for his country, said Morocco also sought more investment.

Malaysian International Trade and Industry Minister Rafidah Aziz said she hoped the new agreement would pave the way for the private sectors to explore trade and investment opportunities.

Among other things, it calls for officials and businessmen of the two sides to meet regularly to discuss increasing economic cooperation.

Rafidah said total trade between Malaysia and Morocco last year was just 41.3 million ringgit ($16.52 million), with Malaysian exports amounting to 40 million ringgit ($16 million).

Referring to the huge imbalance and a decrease in Morocco's exports to Malaysia, she said: "We have to do something to correct it."

She urged Moroccan traders to explore other export opportunities in Malaysia, whose imports from Morocco now are mainly valves and tubes, integrated circuits and parts, and electrical machinery and apparatus.

Malaysia's main exports to Morocco are natural rubber, palm oil, sound recorders, fruits and nuts, and radio and television receivers.

Jettou, who arrived Monday with a 12-member delegation for a three-day visit, said Morocco was seeking foreign investment to help in converting its telecommunications sector to private operation.

Morocco also has opened its doors to foreign investors in areas like agro-business and encouraged investment in its textiles sector, he added.

(AP)

Nikkei Turns Lower, Dollar Above 122 Yen in Morning

TOKYO - Share prices were lower on the Tokyo stock exchange Wednesday morning, with the nikkei stock average falling 134.86 points or 0.7% to end the morning session at 18,132.86 points.

Meanwhile, the dollar was quoted at 122.11-13 in late morning trading, up from 121.83 yen in New York late Tuesday and compared with 121.38-40 yen here late Tuesday.

(AFP)

Chirac Says Lat Am Future With Europe, Not U.S.

PARIS — French President Jacques Chirac said on Sunday on the eve of a tour of Latin America that the continent's economic future lay not in ties with United States but with Europe.

Latin America understands perfectly that it is not in its interest to lock itself into exclusive regional integration, Chirac told radio France Internationale in an interview.

Its vocation is not to be a piece of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), its vocation is to be...open to the world and its' essential economic interest, trade, investment, aid, is not with the United States but towards Europe, Chirac said.

He noted that the European Union was the main trading partner, biggest investor and most generous development aid donor for Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina, the four members of the Mercosur Customs Union which he will visit from Tuesday as well as Bolivia.

The future of Latin America is not with the North/South axis, it is with Europe for reasons linked to history and culture..., Chirac said. His aides said Chirac will hail the subcontinent's return to democracy and economic stability and plead for closer relations between Mercosur and the European Union, which is already its main economic partner.

He is also due to plead for development aid, call for drug consuming countries to help producing countries eradicate the scourge, and urge social justice for Indians.

(Reuter)



Gunman Storms Detroit Bank

DETROIT — A gunman shouting religious passages opened fire at a bank Tuesday, killing three people and wounding two others before he was shot dead. It was the second deadly big-city bank shootout in the United States in 11 days.

The manager and assistant manager of the Comerica Bank branch on Detroit's East Side were among the dead.

A man who was shot in the face before the gunman stormed into the bank survived and was hospitalized in serious condition, Deputy Police Chief Benny Napolean said.

Inside the bank, Napoleon said the gunman began shouting religious phrases and asking people to recite the Lord's prayer as he started firing. Three bank employees, including the managers, were shot.

"It appears as if we have a person who walked in to kill," Police Chief Isaiah Mckinnon said.

The gunman then grabbed a hostage, ran outside and shot the hostage before he exchanged fire with police and was killed, Mckinnon said. No police officers were injured.

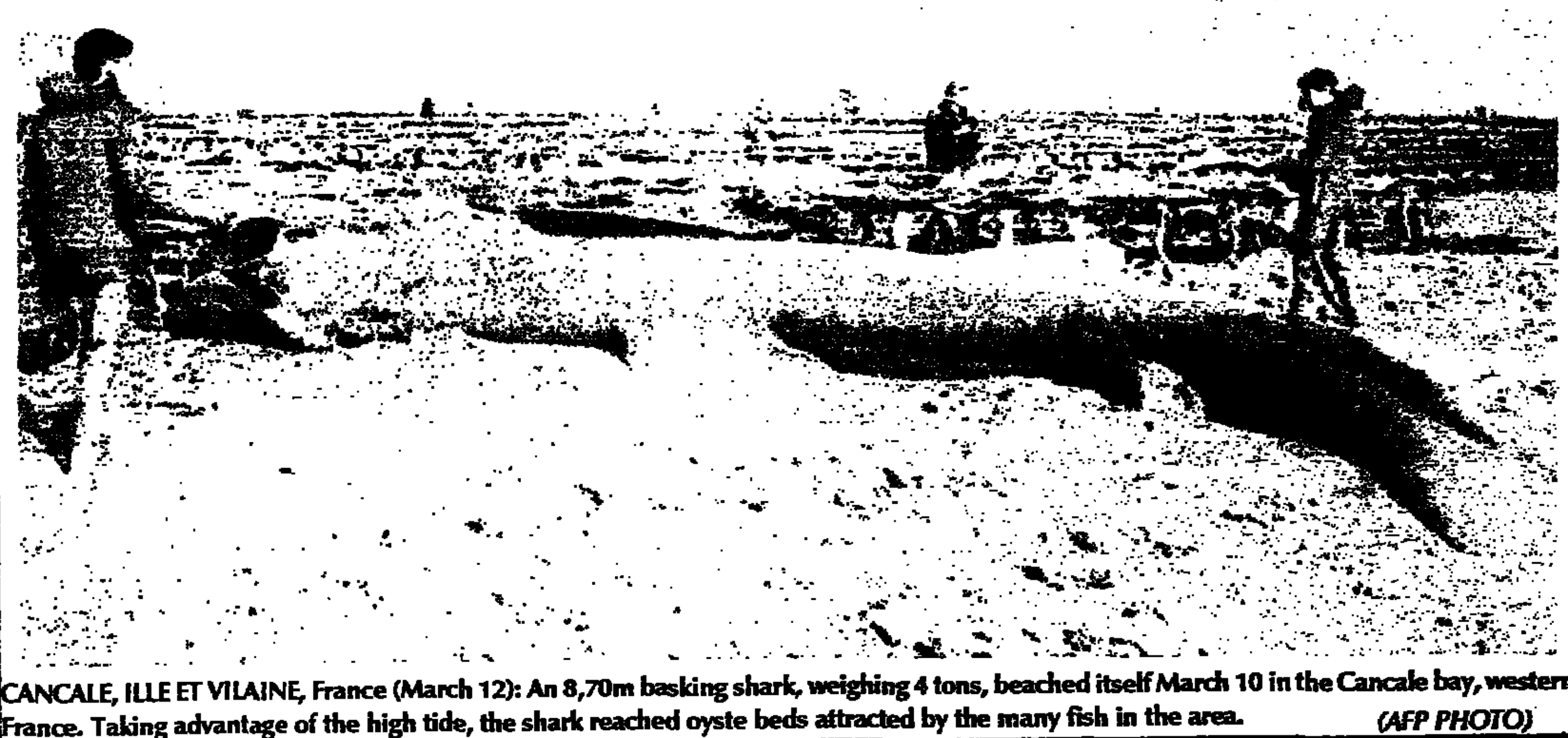
Mckinnon initially described the shootings as an attempted bank robbery but later said it was not.

"We are in the process of investigating to see if in fact there is the possibility of someone else being involved," Mckinnon said.

The Comerica branch is located on a commercial strip surrounded by a residential neighborhood.

After a botched holdup at the Bank of America in Los Angeles on February 28, two men died in a brazen gunfight with police. Sixteen police officers and civilians were wounded or injured in the battle, which was televised live by news helicopters.

Authorities identified the gunmen as Emil Matasareanu, a 30-year-old Romanian emigre, and his accomplice, 26-year-old Larry Eugene Phillips of Los Angeles. (AFP)


CANCALE, ILLE ET VILAINE, France (March 12): An 8,70m basking shark, weighing 4 tons, beached itself March 10 in the Cancale bay, western France. Taking advantage of the high tide, the shark reached oyste beds attracted by the many fish in the area. (AFP PHOTO)

Legacy of Dunblane Massacre: Hope, Courage and Some Divisions

DUNBLANE, Scotland — In the cemetery, rain lashes 16 small headstones clustered around a larger one, and Dunblane's main street is eerily quiet.

Visitors have shunned this beautiful Scottish town in the year since gunman Thomas Hamilton slaughtered 16 kindergartners and their teacher in the school gym. Another 12 children and two teachers were wounded.

Twelve months later, there's hope, strength, courage — and some divisions.

There is resentment that the centuries-old town is branded a massacre site; grumbles that the bereaved parents won't let Dunblane move on; and gossip about payouts from the compensation funds after the March 13 tragedy.

Parents who meet each Thursday in a church hall near Dunblane's gray stone 12th-century cathedral have formed close bonds. They laugh, they treasure family videos of the final Christmas for their children, and they comfort one another. They are marking the anniversary with a TV documentary and a book.

Mick North, a widower whose only child, Sophie, 5, was killed, said both projects were intended to show "how well human nature can deal with things, even things as awful as Dunblane."

The documentary, broadcast Wednesday by Britain's Independent Television Network, was, they said, to show "we can be positive from day to day ... and how the children and Gwen (teacher Gwen Mayor) live on."

So do the children who were wounded.

Six-year-old Coll Austin, shot four times including while he lay bleeding on the ground staring at Hamilton's approaching boots, was hurt worst.

There is resentment that the centuries-old town is branded a massacre site; grumbles that the bereaved parents won't let Dunblane move on; and gossip about payouts from the compensation funds after the March 13 tragedy.

Now fully recovered physically, Coll plays soccer and is back at the Dunblane Primary School. He has asked his parents for a pair of "time shoes" that would enable him to travel back in time to fetch his dead friends.

Coll, initially not expected to survive, opened his eyes four days after surgery to tell his parents what had happened.

"In a whisper, he told us that Mrs. Mayor was dead and that everybody else was dead," Rona Austin recalls in the anniversary book, *"Dunblane: Our Year of Tears"*.

"He said he couldn't go back to school because his teacher had been killed."

Coll's teacher was indeed dead. But Coll learned that some of his friends had survived.

When told that Hamilton — a resentful loner suspected of being a paedophile — had turned the gun on himself and was also dead, Coll replied, "That's fair."

In the year since the killings, tensions have grown among Dunblane's 10,000 residents.

Divisions erupted publicly in December when the bereaved parents planned to erect a 6-foot (2-meter) Christmas tree in the cemetery, decorated with lights powered by a generator. They backed down after protests that it was inappropriate.

The tree idea followed the release of a recording, "Knockin' on Heaven's Door", adapted from the Bob Dylan tune and sung by Dunblane children. Critics considered it mawkish.

Some Dunblane residents say they must begin to put the tragedy behind them.

"We have got to break free of this. We have got to move on," Ann Dickson, a member of the local Stirling Council and a 30-year resident of Dunblane, said in an interview.

"We're not asking the parents to break free," added Mrs. Dickson, who taught Sunday school to some of the victims' parents. "But there must be a way to deal with it without involving the whole town."

This is a town where most people know each other, at least by sight — and some a good deal better.

Dunblane is the sort of place where a new car doesn't go unnoticed. There's gossip in the sole supermarket and in the library, about who's benefited from relief funds, swollen by contributions from around the world.

Trustees appointed by the council run a £4.5 million ($7.2 million) fund.

"The fund does not discuss in public the distribution of any of its money," council spokesman Don Menteith said.

Another fund, run by the *Stirling Observer* newspaper, has £1.7 million ($2.7 million) destined for a community project, perhaps a swimming pool.

"How, how do you move on? The instinct is to stay where we are."

A support center remains open with eight full-time staff. The cost is borne by the national government, which has spent £5 million ($8 million) in Dunblane since the massacre — much of it to demolish the gym and refurbish the 700-pupil school.

Meanwhile, businesses are hurting, with tourism last summer down 85 percent from the previous summer.

At the Stirling Arms, a small, 17th-century hostelry overlooking the River Allan, the only patrons at the bar on a recent day were a couple of locals staring into their drinks.

"We never dreamed this disaster would affect us as it has," owner John Castelow said. "I suppose some people are embarrassed to come into Dunblane. Maybe there's a guilt thing."

Visitors would help Dunblane get back to normal, Castelow suggested.

But for some, normality is over.

"How, how do you move on?" Les Morton, whose child Emily died, says in *"Dunblane: Remembering Our Children"*, the documentary. "The instinct is to stay where we are."

Added Dickson, "That is our problem here, we are all caught in this time warp." (AP)

Dead Sea Relic Given to Jordan

PARIS — A Dead Sea archaeological relic which could hold the key to secret hidden treasures was given to Jordan Tuesday after French experts spent more than two years restoring it.

The 2,000-year-old copper relic, which bears inscriptions apparently indicating more than 60 locations where treasures could be found, was presented at the Louvre Museum to Queen Noor of Jordan, whose country held the territory in which it was found in 1952.

"I am astonished at the growing sophistication of technology," she said, referring to French scientists who have been working to remove rust from the rolled piece of metal since it was sent to France in 1994.

The piece is to be put on show in Amman. Restorers have covered some of it in Plexiglass to protect it from further damage.

French biblical experts have taken advantage of its stay in France to revise translations of the inscriptions, which indicated 64 locations of possible treasure hideaways.

"My reading indicates 61 rather than 64 treasure troves," said Emile Puech of the French Biblical and Archaeological School in Bait-ul-Moqaddas, citing sites near Jericho, Samaria and Qumran in the West Bank and in Bait-ul-Moqaddas.

His translation suggested the treasures were not saved from the Hebrews' Second Temple, destroyed when the Romans invaded Bait-ul-Moqaddas, but belonged to the Essenes — a Jewish sect which lived in Qumran, at the northern end of the Dead Sea, from the 2nd century B.C. to the 1st century A.D. (AFP)

President Bans Showing of Filipina Maid's Life Story

MANILA — Philippine President Fidel Ramos on Tuesday banned a movie on Filipina maid Sarah Balabagan's ordeal in the United Arab Emirates, saying it could upset ties between Manila and Abu Dhabi, officials said.

The film tells the life story of 19-year-old Balabagan, a Filipino Muslim girl who was saved by a royal pardon from a firing squad in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where she was convicted for the 1994 stabbing death of her Arab employer whom she said had attempted to rape her.

Presidential executive secretary Ruben Torres said he received a fax from Ramos, who is currently visiting Bahrain, ordering him to "take all the necessary actions to defer the public showing of the said movie due to anticipated extremely negative impact" on bilateral ties.

He said it could also lead to "risk of failure in negotiations to save John Aquino," a Filipino who has appealed his death sentence before the UAE Supreme Court for the killing of an Indian fellow worker, and other Filipinos hoping for clemency.

The ban coincided with a temporary restraining order issued by a lower court Tuesday. The temporary ban would be in effect pending a court ruling on the petition of a Muslim group who said the movie offended their Islamic faith.

The movie, produced by Viva Films, was scheduled to be shown in Manila theaters on Wednesday. The producers were not available for comment.

Foreign Department Undersecretary Leonides Caday, who had seen the film, said in a report to Ramos that the movie portrayed the UAE judicial system "in a bad light."

Caday also described the scene where Balabagan was given 100 lashes as "exaggerated" because it showed a burly male jailguard hitting Sarah with a large stick.

"Ordinarily, if the inmate is female, a female guard will do the lashing," Caday said.

Caday also said that the rape scene in the movie, which showed that Balabagan's employer did not succeed in raping her, and the splattering of blood on the wall when Balabagan repeatedly stabbed her employer "may touch the sensitivity of the UAE government."

Director Joel Lamangan told AFP last week when the movie's premiere was also cancelled that the movie was based on the personal account of Balabagan and accused the Philippine government of "censorship of the first order." (AFP)

Charles Visits UN, Talks to Camilla

UNITED NATIONS — Britain's Prince Charles arrived at the United Nations on Tuesday to applause and cheers from UN staff members, and headed straight for Camilla.

Camilla Wahl that is. She and a group of other staff members had gathered by the UN building elevators to greet the British heir to the throne.

Prince Charles, who is romantically linked to Camilla Parker Bowles, studiously avoided journalists as he arrived to pay a courtesy call on UN chief Kofi Annan, but chatted briefly with staff as he waited at the elevator.

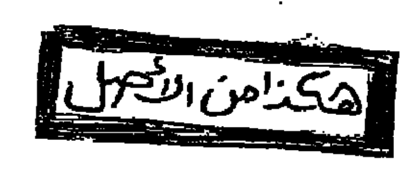
Wahl told reporters afterwards that the prince asked her if she worked at the United Nations, "and if he had interrupted our lunch."

Prince Charles, accompanied by British Ambassador Sir John Weston, later made an impromptu visit to the UN Security Council, startling UN diplomats as his security escort brushed past them.

But the prince did not enter the Security Council chamber where the 15 members were in formal session, issuing a condemnation of Bosnian Croats for their role in shootings last month in the divided city of Mostar in Bosnia-Hercegovina.

Prince Charles, in New York for a dinner at the Metropolitan Museum of Art at which he is guest of honor, was to attend a lunch with Annan hosted by Weston.

The Metropolitan Museum dinner was for the founding sponsors of the American Associates of the Saint Catherine Foundation. (AFP)









THOUGHT

The ability of a person to atone has always been the most remarkable of human features.

Leon Uris

PRAYER

Noon..........................12:14
Evening.......................18:30
Dawn (tomorrow)...............04:44
Sunrise (tomorrow)............06:16

Anti-Inflammatory Drug May Reduce Alzheimer's Risk

WASHINGTON — Anti-inflammatory drugs taken for at least two years may reduce the risk of alzheimer's disease, an article published in *Neurology Magazine* says.

The article in the magazine's March issue says that Non-Steroid Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDS) such as ibuprofen may influence the inflammation that scientists have linked to alzheimer's.

Inflammation is believed to be a response to the amyloid and protein plaques in the brain that are characteristic of the disease, which causes people to lose their mental faculties.

The study, which followed 2,300 people over a 15-year period, suggests that NSAIDS may influence inflammation by interfering with the actions of some proteins and thus lessening their harmful effects.

The survey by scientists at the National Institute on Aging and John Hopkins University, is described as the first long-term study of a large number of people on the subject.

The results showed that the overall risk of alzheimer's in 1,686 participants who were taking NSAIDS was half the risk of those not taking the drugs, the researchers said.

The study also looked at the effects of acetaminophen, a pain-killing drug with few or no anti-inflammatory properties, which produced no decreased risk for alzheimer's, and aspirin, which "might show some effect" if taken in high dosages over a long period of time.

However, the study warned that chronic use of NSAIDS also has serious long-term side effects, such as peptic ulcers and impaired kidney function.

The researchers recommend *clinical trials on people at risk for* alzheimer's to determine the merits of long-terms use of NSAIDS.

"What the effectiveness of NSAIDS tells us about the inflammatory response and the alzheimer's disease process will be critically important to developing even better agents and approaches," the researchers said.

Alzheimer's affects an estimated 10 per cent of people over 65 and almost half of those over 85 in the United States.

Four million Americans suffer from the disease and 100,000 die from it every year.

Malawi Launches Drive Against Tuberculosis

BLANTYRE — Malawi is launching a health drive against tuberculosis (tb), which has been rendered more potent by the country's high rate of infection with the AIDS virus, a senior health official said recently.

Some 20,000 people contract the disease each year said Felix Salaniponi, a tb programme manager in the Health Ministry, adding: "out of this, 3,000 people die from tuberculosis every year." Speaking at a news conference to drum up support for the government's drive against the disease, Salaniponi said for every 100,000 people in Malawi, 65 carried tb.

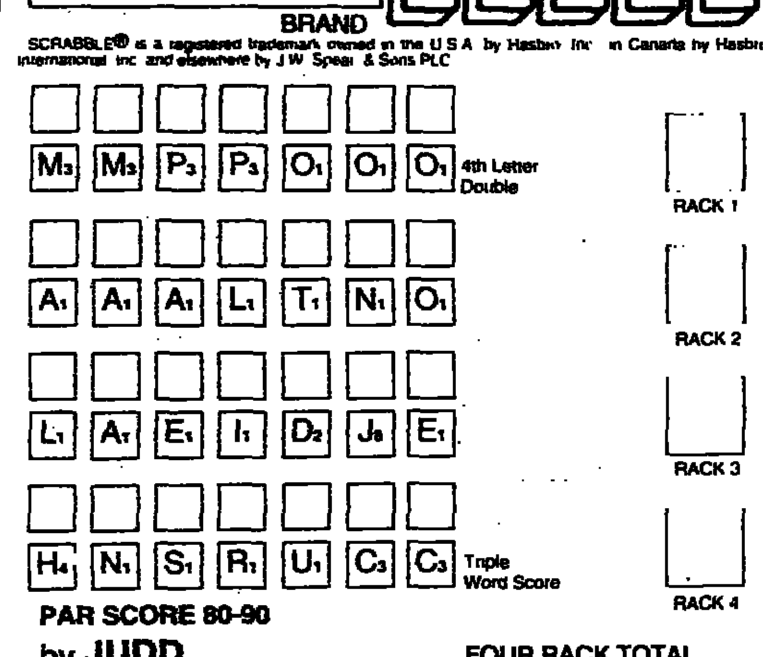
He said the problem was worsened by high levels of infection with the human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS.

"AIDS has overshadowed the tb problem, but what is killing people is tb. If we cure tb an AIDS patient stays (alive) longer," Salaniponi said.

"Tuberculosis is the disease of the poor and it likes places where people are overcrowded and general hygiene standards are very low." He said just 14 percent of tb sufferers respond to the drug thiacetazone and Malawi was no longer using it.

The government had returned a seven year stock of the drug donated by Germany, suggesting that it should be sent to a country which had less of an HIV problem.

(AFP)



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M3	M3	P3	P3	O1	O1	O1	4th Letter Double	RACK 1
A1	A1	A1	L1	T1	N1	O1		RACK 2
L1	A1	E1	I1	D2	J8	E1		RACK 3
H4	N1	S1	R1	U1	C3	C3	Triple Word Score	RACK 4

PAR SCORE 80-90

by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL ____
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7- letter word from the letters in each row. To total points of your words, use scoring directions to right of each row. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words can be found in OSW Official Scrabble Words (Chambers). JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

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SCRABBLE® BRAND GRAMS SOLUTION BY JUDD

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S1	A1	D2	D2	L1	E1	D2	RACK 1 =	70
H4	E1	L1	I1	C3	A1	L1	RACK 2 =	62
C3	A1	T1	C3	H4	Y4		RACK 3 =	16
F4	I1	L1	M3	E1	D2		RACK 4 =	12
I1	G2	U1	A1	N1	A1		RACK 5 =	11

PAR SCORE 110-120 JUDD'S TOTAL 171

3-12-95

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FERD'NAND ® by Henrik Rehr



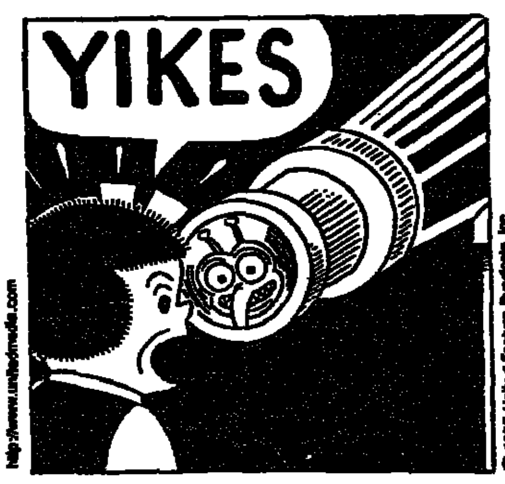




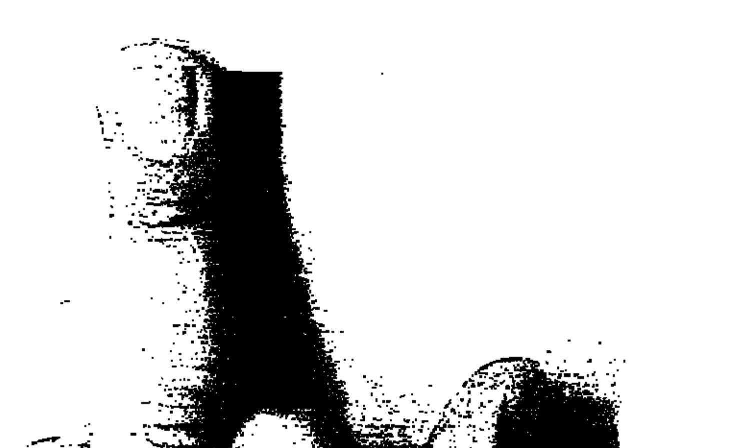


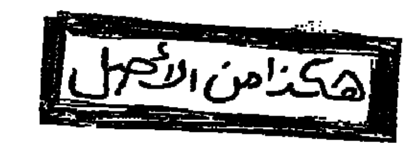
NANCY ® by Guy & Brad Gilchrist










هكذا من الأرشيف

Women Kept Out of Politics in Europe

HELSINKI — As French Premier Alain Juppe proposed amending his country's constitution to boost women's role in politics, a conference here heard that France's lamentably low proportion of female legislators is far from unique in Europe.

"For a long time yet it will be much easier to give up a seat in a bus to a woman than a seat in Parliament," said Lydie Err, leader of the Luxembourg delegation to Tuesday's gathering organized by the Council of Europe.

Even in a country like Luxembourg, with a long tradition of democracy and a high level of women's education, female participation in politics is still minimal, she said.

For the new democracies that have emerged from the collapse of communism in Eastern and Central Europe sexual equality is proving even harder to attain. As economic problems accompany the change from central planning to a market system, women are usually the first to lose their jobs.

In addition, Err said, there is a "psychological block" among both men and women against female politicians at both national and local level in most European countries.

Sweden and Norway head the 40 countries in the Council of Europe with 40 percent and 39 percent women members of Parliament respectively.

This compares with between 10 and 15 percent in Eastern and Central Europe, eight percent in Croatia and Slovenia, 6.4 percent in France and 2.4 percent in Turkey, according to recent statistics.

Beyond these clear differences between North and South, East and West, in Europe, there is a need to introduce stronger measures to try to change mentalities more rapidly, Err said.

She called for an addition to the European human rights convention of a new article specifically providing for the encouragement of sexual equality, and the introduction of a minimum quota of women in national parliaments.

She also suggested preferential subsidies for political parties that gave a larger role to women, curbs on the accumulation of functions by individuals and a limit on the number of successive electoral mandates.

Err also urged the creation of a commission for sexual equality in the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, and said women politicians should set up networks of connections to meet men on equal terms.

On Tuesday Juppe suggested female quotas for local, regional and European ballots in France, but he stopped short of suggesting obligatory proportions of female candidates for National Assembly elections.

As far as women in government are concerned, France has just 12.5 percent, one of the lowest levels in Europe.

According to a poll published in the daily *Le Monde*, 60 percent of legislators are against quotas — including 22 of the 32 female deputies in the National Assembly. (AFP)



BEIJING, CHINA (March 10): A policeman with his sniffer dog checks for explosives in a lamppost base in Beijing's Tiananmen Square before the plenum meeting of the National People's Congress, the country's parliament. Two bombs exploded in central Beijing last week causing heightened concern that the city may be the target of further terrorist attacks.

(AFP PHOTO)

British Government Defeated on Plan to Restrict Prisoners' Release

LONDON — The British government suffered a defeat in Parliament over plans to restrict the early release of prisoners when the Upper House, the House of Lords, insisted there be no change in Scotland.

In an ambush by the opposition, members voted by 109 to 67, a majority of 42, for an amendment to a crime and punishment bill for Scotland to ensure new rules on parole and earned remission did not result in longer sentences.

The defeat was the second for the government in the lords on its plans for tougher prison sentences.

Hardline Home Secretary Michael Howard last month accused the opposition of driving a "coach and horses" through his crime bill when the lords voted by 180 to 172 to retain some element of judicial discretion in mandatory sentences.

Howard has also suffered several lords defeats on other legislation.

After the lords vote, Scottish Secretary Michael Forsyth claimed that it went against "the wishes of the people of Scotland." (AFP)

Campaigning Underway for Croatian Elections

ZAGREB — Campaigning is underway in Croatia ahead of local and Upper House elections next month which will be a key test of the political waters ahead of presidential polls later this year.

International attention has mainly focused on the effect the April 13 polls will have in eastern Slavonia — the last Serb-held part of the country which is currently under UN administration.

The elections will be an important step in the return of the region to Zagreb's rule, an event from which the ruling right-wing Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) intends to make political capital.

A statement issued by the party leadership, and carried by the Croatian news agency HINA, said that eastern Slavonia would be one focus of their campaign.

However, in the rest of Croatia, the polls will be a test of political opinion ahead of presidential elections due this year. No date has been officially announced as yet, although local papers say they could be in June.

The HDZ is maintaining that it will emerge the major party in the local and Upper House polls, with party officials suggesting they could win 40 percent.

However, it is not known what will be the effect of the recent illness of President Franjo Tudjman, the architect of Croatian independence, who will be standing for a third presidential term this year.

The president, who consistently ranks better than his party in opinion polls, was hospitalized in Washington in November, amid reports of cancer.

The opposition, which performed well in the last local elections in October 1995, including winning Zagreb, is hopeful of success.

"Changes — make Croatia smile again" is the slogan with which the Croatian Social and Liberal Party (HSLS), led by Vlado Gotovac, is wooing the Croatian public.

Meanwhile, the left-wing Social Democratic Party (SDP) is playing on allegations of corruption in the ruling party. "A good life for all and not just for them," is the slogan appearing on television and on billboards underneath a photograph of their leader, Ivica Racan.

One Western diplomat told AFP that while it was hard to assess the real extent of corruption, people regarded it as an issue.

"It's enough to trouble people, particularly in Zagreb," he said.

An opinion poll published in an independent newspaper last week cast doubt on the HDZ's confident predictions of success.

The weekly *Nacional* asked 500 people from around the country which party they would vote for. Only 23.8 percent said they would vote HDZ.

Some 35.4 percent said they would vote for the combined HSLS and the Croatian Peasants' Party (HSS), and 11.4 percent for the SDP.

Some 18.6 percent said they didn't know.

Recent events in Belgrade have given an extra undercurrent to the polls. There, the authorities refused to accept local election results which gave the opposition sweeping gains, sparking months of street protests.

The Croatian satirical paper *Feral Tribune* has compared the situation to that in Zagreb last year where tudjman four times refused to accept the opposition's choice of mayor and then dissolved the council on a technicality in April.

"It wasn't a satisfactory situation," the Western diplomat said. (AFP)

Chirac in TV Bid to Boost Morale of Young Jobless

PARIS — French President Jacques Chirac went on television to try to boost the sagging morale of the nation's unemployed young in a move that seemed designed to polish his image ahead of legislative elections in a year's time.

In a long interview on the state television channel France 2, Chirac appeared to be trying to counter an opposition Socialist Party promise to create 700,000 jobs for young people in two years, half in the public sector.

France has 606,000 people under 25 looking for work, with not much prospect of finding any in an economy that seems structurally unable to create jobs.

Chirac was interviewed live by two television personalities, echoing the theme of the program entitled "Year 2000, a chance for everyone" aimed not only at young people but also parents, teachers, employers and all those active on the social front.

In what resembled a pep talk, the president said the young people of France were "tremendous" and that "a nation is only a great nation if it does all that is necessary to integrate its children." Responding to a question about levels of illiteracy of between 15 and 20 percent among school leavers, Chirac pledged that by the end of his mandate, all primary school children would be able to read and write.

Chirac urged Education Minister Francois Bayrou to "reflect" on reading methods and called for a parliamentary debate on syllabuses and educational rythms.

The president also said that all French secondary schools should be linked to the Internet and that all children should have access to cyberspace from the age of 11. Chirac added that added value tax (VAT) should be reduced on computer equipment to 5.6 percent, the rate applied to the essentials of life.

The president, who in December discovered the computer mouse for the first time, emphasized the importance of advanced technology in job creation.

Chirac further emphasized the importance of job training schemes and said he would propose a parliamentary bill to establish a kind of savings account, to be financed by employers and workers, to finance training courses.

Chirac has made youth employment one of his main themes, encouraging jobseekers to look further afield for work, including abroad, and to take advantage of opportunities advertised on the Internet.

Such initiatives, giving him a higher profile on the French domestic scene, have helped to boost his low scores in the opinion polls, which had been dragged down by the deep unpopularity of Prime Minister Alain Juppe.

Since Chirac was elected president in May 1995, the government has organized no fewer than three summits devoted to youth employment, involving trade unionists and employers, the latest of them only a month ago.

But in spite of financial incentives for job creation, the results have left much to be desired.

A public opinion poll published in the *Journal du Dimanche* Sunday newspaper showed some 62 percent of young people in France are optimistic.

But 65 percent said they relied on their own efforts to work out their future, and only 13 percent were counting on Chirac, who, according to polls at the time, won election on the youth vote. (AFP)

Chirac Accuses Int'l Community of 'Complicity of Silence'

PARIS — President Jacques Chirac accused the international community of a "complicity of silence" regarding the crisis in Zaire.

Speaking to his cabinet, he appealed to other countries to "meet their responsibilities" and work toward a cease-fire that would enable the delivery of crucial humanitarian aid.

"The situation in Zaire is dramatic," Chirac told the ministers. "No one can ignore this any more, and no one can remain indifferent.

"One can wonder whether there isn't a sort of complicity of silence," Chirac said.

The French leader spoke after the Minister for Humanitarian Affairs, Xavier Emmanuelli, reported on his trip to Zaire. He was in Kisangani and Ubundu, as well as Kinshasa, the capital.

The Zairian government is disputing claims that rebels have surrounded Kisangani, a key eastern city, on three sides.

The government and the rebels both have said they support a UN peace plan to end the fighting, but neither is willing to meet the other's conditions for negotiations.

Emmanuelli said it was necessary to "secure" the Kisangani area to allow relief organizations to return there.

One French aid flight arrived in Kisangani Sunday, and another is expected to go on Thursday.

"France solemnly calls on the international community to meet its responsibilities in applying the necessary pressure to obtain a cease-fire and the humanitarian intervention that is urgently needed," Chirac said.

He added that France strongly supports the UN secretary-general's proposals, and asked that Emmanuelli's observations be passed on to the United Nations and France's European Union partners.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman Echoed Chirac's statements at a briefing Tuesday.

"Are there no countries in the world who care about the fate of these people?" Jacques Rummelhardt asked. "Is it only France that cares?" (AP)

Albanian President Shuffles Government

ROME — Albania's President, Sali Berisha, has appointed a prime minister and promised to set up a new government within 24 hours, the Foreign Ministry said.

Berisha communicated the news to Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini in a phone call, the ministry said.

Ministry officials said Albanian state television identified the new premier as Bashkim Fino, a socialist and former mayor of the southern city Gjirokastra.

Italy has been pushing Albania's government to make political concessions and has been trying to play a leading role in mediating the crisis. (AFP)

Chinese-Made Computers Claim Lion's Share of Home Market

SHANGHAI — Chinese-made computers have for the first time in over 10 years captured more than half of the domestic market, breaking the dominance of imported brands, a industry publication said recently.

The latest issue of the *China Computer Weekly* said sales of domestically-made computers accounted for 56 percent of the 1.8 million computers sold in China last year, up more than 20 percent from the previous year.

Since their entry into the market in the early 1980s, foreign brands, backed by strong technology and marketing expertise, have dominated the market.

In 1995, 65 percent of the total 1.4 million computers sold in China were imported, while 35 percent were made in China, of which about half were assembled from imported packages.

The report said the situation changed last year when local manufacturers slashed prices.

Lianxiang Group, the biggest computer manufacturer in China, took the lead, cutting its prices four times last year, and was followed by Greatwall Group, Tongchuang Group and Fangzheng Group.

Chinese-made computers, which were priced at more than 20,000 yuan ($2,400) each at the beginning of last year, could be bought for half the price at the end of 1996, making them about a third cheaper than imported models.

Much of the decline in prices, however, was in line with worldwide trends, industry sources said.

Song Baichuan, a consultant to the Shanghai municipal government Science and Technology Advance Committee, told AFP lower prices and convenient maintenance service were the reasons for the success of Chinese-made computers.

"This market has just opened up and the biggest potential is individual demand which has just started to grow."

Industry sources said domestic manufacturers had also benefitted from several big government orders, such as from the education and information departments, which were more price conscious.

Despite the inroads they have made, domestic computers were no big threat to foreign brands except for those at the higher end of the market, Stephen Wang, director of Taiwanese firm Acer Inc.'s representative office in Shanghai, said in an interview.

"There are three segments in China's market. Imported brands, local brands and unbranded local products. The local brands are taking away market share from unbranded products," he said.

Wang said Acer sold 56,000 computers in China last year, more than double the 24,000 units sold in 1995 and had forecast sales of 90,000 units this year.

The company, which has about four percent of market share, is ranked six to seventh among all foreign and domestic brands in the market.

"This market has just opened up and the biggest potential is individual demand which has just started to grow," he said.

Industry sources said manufacturers such Compaq and IBM, which were affected by lower-priced local products, were taking measures to compete, including moving production to lower cost bases such as China and Taiwan.

Wang said the company had managed to increase its sales because Acer computers were priced between the high-end imported products and domestic brands.

"There is not much difference between the product quality of local-made and imported machines," he said.

"The main difference lies in management, after sales service and the availability of parts."

Acer is also the only computer company in Shanghai to offer payment by installment schemes, which has helped increase sales among students and accounted for 30 percent of its total sales.

Acer is also the only computer company in Shanghai to offer payment by installment schemes, which has helped increase sales among students and accounted for 30 percent of its total sales.

Wang said the best selling price range was between 7,000 to 8,000 yuan and that the company was studying how to put on the market an imported computer within that price range.

The company manufactures computer monitors and keyboards in Beijing and is moving more of its production process to China.

The computer weekly said domestic manufacturers had expanded their production scale in recent years and tried to decrease their production costs, while paying more attention to the quality of products and services.

The report said some Chinese-made computers had succeeded in obtaining ISO 9000 classification.

(AFP)

NBC, Microsoft Announce New Project

NEW YORK — U.S. television network NBC and software giant Microsoft on Monday announced the creation of a new Internet site that offers coverage of breaking business news worldwide.

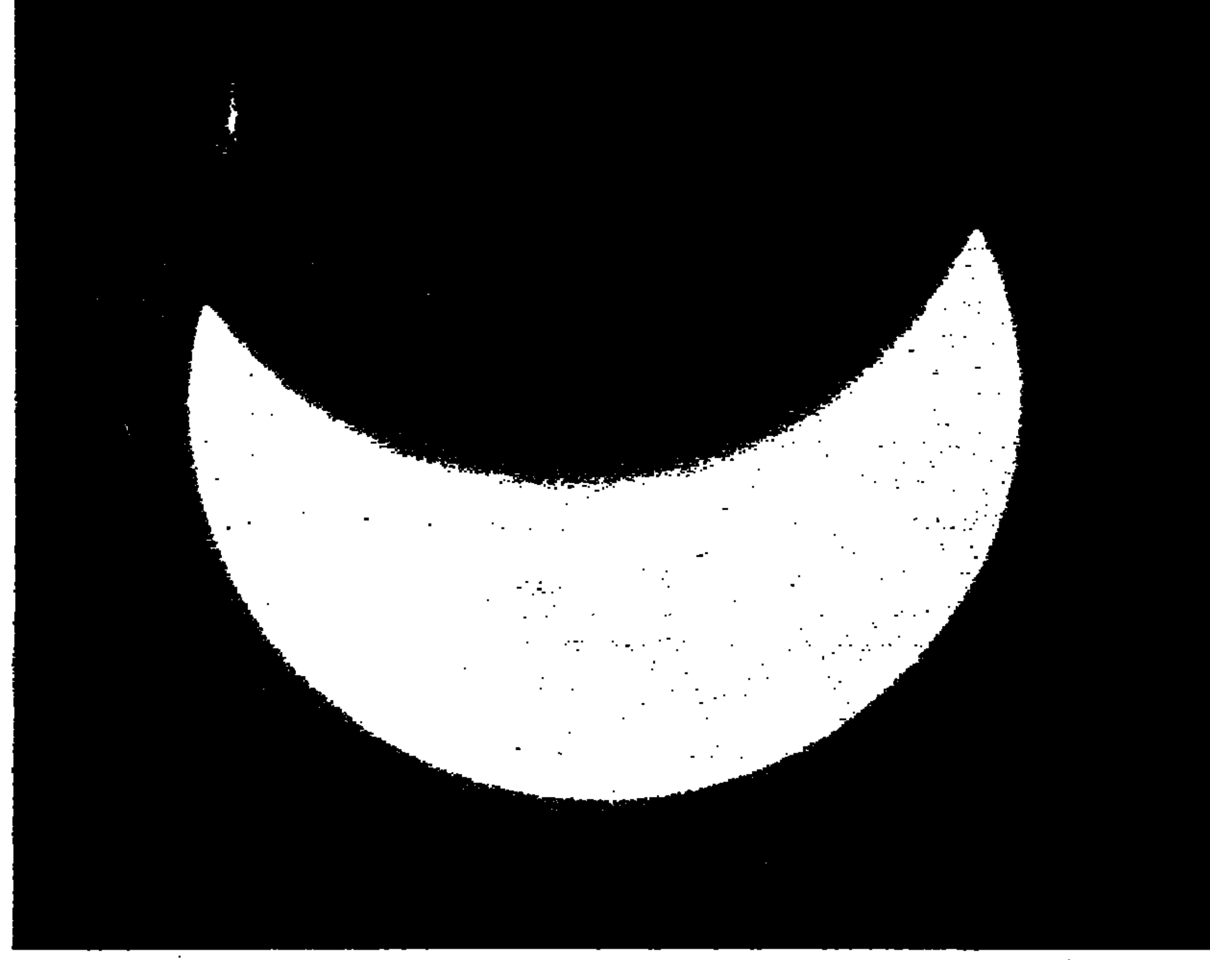
The two groups, which already operate the MSNBC 24-hour news channel, said the new venture — known as MSNBC Business Video — will offer coverage of key news events in several formats: live, unfiltered audio and video programs, on-demand multimedia reports, full-text transcripts and an on-demand archive with more than 300 interviews a month with business executives.

"MSNBC Business Video is breaking new ground on the Internet and corporate intranets," according to Michael Wheeler, president of MSNBC Desktop Video, of which MSNBC business video will be a part.

"Never before have people had the ease of turning to their computer to get live and archived audio and video coverage of breaking business news and analysis and commentary."

The Web site is www.businessvideo.msnbc.com.

(AFP)



TOKYO, Japan (March 11):The moon hides the sun over Tokyo in Japan's last chance this century to observe a solar eclipse. A total solar eclipse can be experienced in an area between Mongolia and Siberia while about 63 percent of the eclipse could be seen in Tokyo.

(AFP PHOTO)

Mexico's Last Primitive Peoples Lose Spiritual Leader

LACANDON JUNGLE, Mexico — Mexico's Lacandon Indians, the nation's last primitive jungle peoples, have lost their spiritual leader with the death in December of clan leader Chan Kin the Elder.

Living in the towns of Lacanja-Chansayab, Naha and Metzabk in the depths of the jungles of Chiapas State, the perhaps 500 remaining Lacandon Indians rarely cut their long, dark hair and wear nothing but white tunics.

When the charismatic Chan Kin the Elder died, the town of Naha lost a patriarch. He was husband to four women, father of more than 40 and grandfather or great-grandfather to countless townspeople.

Since the Lacandon have just four numbers — one, two, three and many — Chan Kin's age was always a mystery. It has been estimated as more than 100.

Chan Kin was first photographed in the 1940s by Swiss photographer Gertrude Duby Blom, who also considered him a friend. Duby, who fled the Nazis when she was living in France, was the only white woman that the Lacandon ever allowed into their Watoch Kuh, also called the House of God.

She died at age 92 on December 23, 1993, three years to the day before her friend Chan Kin.

Her passion for the Lacandon spurred her and her husband, archaeologist Frans Blom, to found a library and research center in San Cristobal de Las Casas, a pretty colonial city in Chiapas.

Na Bolom, or the House of the Jaguar, opened in 1953 and has since attracted scientists around the world studying the Lacandon and Maya living on the Yucatan and northern Central America. The Lacandon are considered an offshoot of the Maya, who appeared in 1500 BC and peaked at 300-900 AD.

The survival of the Lacandon, who call themselves the Hach Winik or True Men, depends on the jungle.

When Zapatista National Liberation Army rebels attacked here on January 1, 1994, the Lacandon were at the margins and liked it that way. They retreated deeper into the forest during the fighting.

But the jungle is shrinking because of drug-traffickers, lumbering and hunting of exotic animals, which themselves are getting extinct.

(AFP)

Mitsubishi Electric, IBM Studying Tie-Up

TOKYO — Japan's Mitsubishi Electric Corp. and U.S. computer giant International Business Machines Corp. (IBM) are studying a tie-up in the area of network computers, a Mitsubishi Electric official said Tuesday.

The companies may join hands to develop and produce network computers to access the Internet Web of computer networks, the official said.

But, he added: "We have not decided anything, so there are no agreements at the present on the sales and the OBM (original equipment manufacturing) basis provision."

The *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* Tuesday said IBM would handle development and Mitsubishi Electric would manufacture the network terminals.

The leading economic daily said the Japanese maker aimed to launch machines under its brand this year in Japan, priced at 50,000 to 100,000 yen ($411 to $822) a unit, about one third of the price of conventional personal computers.

Mitsubishi Electric may also supply IBM with terminals under the IBM brand for sales worldwide, the report said.

(AFP)

Cyberfest Opens to Celebrate Hal

CHICAGO — Scientists and sci-fi buffs kicked off a cyberfest in Urbana, eastern Illinois, Monday to explore futuristic technology and celebrate Hal, the computer hero of Arthur Clarke's classic novel "*2001: A Space Odyssey*".

More than 40 computer firms, including Apple, IBM, Lotus, Microsoft and Oracle, are showing off high-tech software and gadgetry of the present and the next millennium during the week-long extravaganza.

Scientists at the University of Illinois, a pioneer in the field of computer technology, are also to give details of their groundbreaking research in artificial intelligence, computer lip-reading, vision, speech recognition and reasoning ability.

But the highlight of the festival will be a tribute to Hal 9000, the chatty, chess-playing computer who, in Clarke's 1968 sci-fi classic, said he "became operational at the Hal plant in Urbana, Illinois, on January 12, 1997."

The festival is taking place on the very spot where the fictional computer was to have been created.

On Friday from his home in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Clarke, who co-wrote the screenplay for Stanley Kubrick's movie — also titled "*2001: A Space Odyssey*" —, is to appear via an audio-video Internet link at a special gala which will be accessible live on the World Wide Web

(AFP)

Germany Has No Home-Grown BSE Cases

BONN — Germany said on Monday a calf originally thought to have been the first locally-born animal to die of mad cow disease was in fact imported from Britain, and that Germany's own livestock was free of the disease.

"After this report Germany can once again say it is BSE free," Agriculture State Secretary Franz-Josef Feiter told a news conference to present the results of genetic tests into the animal's origin.

The calf died of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) last December, sparking fears that it could be the first German- born cow to fall victim to the disease, believed to be a threat to humans.

But Feiter said it had been established with 95 percent certainty that the calf was an import from Britain called Scottish Queen, and that it had almost certainly been infected there by contaminated feed.

After the calf's death, German authorities ordered the slaughter of more than 5,000 cows imported from Britain and Switzerland, the only countries where BSE is widespread.

Feiter said he expected the German states to vote on Friday to make this emergency measure legally binding.

Until December there had been 165,000 BSE cases in Britain, but just four in Germany, all in cows brought from Britain.

Germany had always maintained it was free of BSE because there is no evidence of any German livestock farmer using contaminated protein feed — the standard source of infection.

The only other infection route which scientists consider potentially viable is from mother to calf. But the ministry said the fact that the cow was directly imported from Britain meant it was probably not a case of maternal infection.

The result means German authorities are unlikely to order the slaughter of 14,000 cows directly descended from British and Swiss imports, which they had been considering.

The genetic tests on the cow were ordered after confusion over its ear-tag cast doubt on its origin and prompted worries that controls to prevent the spread of the disease to Germany were not strict enough.

(Reuter)

Unlawful Killings During Operation "Grapes of Wrath"

Part 3

The Laws of War

Not all civilian deaths in wartime are unlawful. In the euphemistic terms of military spokespersons, "collateral damage" is to be expected in war. But there are clear rules that set limits on the conduct of hostilities and in particular outlaw the use of certain means or methods of warfare. These rules are designed to protect – to the maximum extent possible – civilian lives. The rules include a prohibition on any direct attacks on civilians or civilian objects, including reprisals directed at such targets. But they also include prohibitions on certain types of attacks which, though ostensibly aimed at a legitimate military target, have an indiscriminate or disproportionate impact on civilians or civilian objects. Finally, the rules make clear the narrow circumstances in which civilians or civilian objects might lose their protection – for example, when a civilian object is used for military purposes.

The fullest statement of these rules is in Additional Protocol 1 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol 1). This Protocol, which was adopted in 1977, has been ratified by over 140 states, but the fundamental provisions of this Protocol, including for the most part those concerning the protection of the civilian population cited in this report, are generally considered to be part of customary international law and therefore *binding on all states*.

Prohibition of direct attacks against civilians

Article 48 of Protocol 1 sets out the "Basic rule" regarding the protection of civilian lives:

"In order to ensure respect for and protection of the civilian population and civilian objects, the Parties to the conflict shall at all times distinguish between the civilian population and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives and accordingly shall direct their operations only against military objectives."

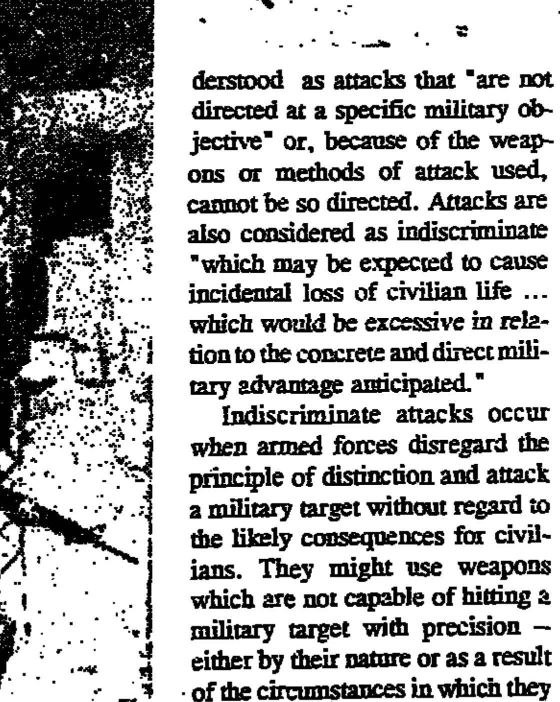
This rule is often referred to as the principle of distinction. Article 51(2) of Protocol 1 spells out unambiguously that "The civilian population as such, as well as individual civilians, shall not be the object of attack."

Prohibition of indiscriminate attacks

In addition to prohibiting direct attacks on civilians, international law also prohibits indiscriminate attacks. In the language of article 51(4) of Protocol 1, these are understood as attacks that "are not directed at a specific military objective" or, because of the weapons or methods of attack used, cannot be so directed. Attacks are also considered as indiscriminate "which may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life ... which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated."







Indiscriminate attacks occur when armed forces disregard the principle of distinction and attack a military target without regard to the likely consequences for civilians. They might use weapons which are not capable of hitting a military target with precision – either by their nature or as a result of the circumstances in which they are employed. Or their tactics or method of attack might show a disregard for civilian lives. There is evidence (see the next section) that Israel carried out a number of indiscriminate attacks during Operation "Grapes of Wrath" where, in attacking what they alleged to be military targets, they killed many civilians.

Prohibition of reprisal attacks on civilian population

As pointed out (in above section), a defining feature of the conflict between Israel and *Hizbullah* has been the extent to which the attacks by one party leading to civilian deaths have been used by the other party to justify reprisal attacks on civilians. The reasoning appears to be that it is necessary to target civilians under the control of the opposing party, in the belief that it is only by doing so that one can ultimately ensure one's own civilians are not hit again. Of course, in reality such a line of reasoning has led directly to repeated escalations in the conflict with the primary victims being civilians.

International law places a clear and unambiguous prohibition on reprisals aimed at civilians. Article 51(6) of Protocol 1 provides:

"Attacks against the civilian population or civilians by way of *reprisals are prohibited*."

The reason for such a prohibition is only too vividly demonstrated in the history of the conflict across the Israel-Lebanon border – rather than preventing civilian deaths, reprisals tend to undermine whatever tenuous protection civilians enjoy and create a vicious circle of attack and counter-attack with civilians being the victims. The law is clear. Civilian deaths on one side cannot be used to justify a reprisal attack against civilians on the other side.

(Courtesy Amnesty International)

(To be contd)

Uganda Calls For Urgent Help to Avoid Famine

KAMPALA — Uganda has called for urgent international relief supplies to avert the threat of famine in the drought-hit east of the country.

Uganda's weather office said that rains normally expected in March were now unlikely to arrive until April.

Paul Etiang, minister for labor and social services, told a Women's Day meeting at the weekend that people in affected areas should prepare for a worse situation and called for urgent help from abroad.

Etiang said 2.1 million people in northern and eastern Uganda were affected by current food shortages.

In the northern Ugandan town of Kitgum, local authorities said there was an acute food crisis, especially in camps created for people displaced in fighting or Sudanese refugees.

Agriculture officer Valdo Odeke of the northern town of Kumi said that people in eight of the 18 sub-counties in his district were on the brink of starvation.

Odeke told reporters that in worst-case areas, people ate three times a week while in better-off places, meals were once a day instead of the customary three.

He added that too much rain in the first half of last year flooded crops while drought beginning in the second part destroyed whatever crops had been secured.

Local Council official Bamusende Bwambale said impending famine in his southwestern Kasese district was mainly because of a low-scale civil war in the area. Rebels the Ugandan government says operate from Zaire have been active there for months.

Etiang's warning came after a senior Ugandan food official said last week that drought and civil strife could explode into mass starvation unless action was taken to stem the problems.

Augustine Mwendaya, coordinator of the National Early Warning and Food Information Unit, said that districts in east Uganda faced famine because drought had destroyed their crops.

There is actually fear of serious famine. We have already informed the authorities of imminent disaster, Mwendaya said.

Etiang also blamed the famine on rebellion in northern Uganda and the southwestern district of Kasese, indiscriminate sale of food stocks in eastern Uganda and ecological factors.

Armed factions in the north have fought the government of President Yoweri Museveni for nearly a decade. The most prominent of these is the Lords' Resistance Army that seeks to rule the country on the basis of The Bible's Ten Commandments.

The worst drought in East Africa in four years has severely reduced food production in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. It also threatens to cut production of their key cash crop, coffee. *(Reuter)*

UN Criticized Croatia on Human Rights, War Crimes Cooperation

UNITED NATIONS — A UN report criticized Croatia for the "disturbing" treatment of the Serb minority and for "unsatisfactory" cooperation with a UN war crimes tribunal.

The report by Secretary General Kofi Annan said security conditions for Croatian Serbs, most of whom are elderly "continue to be unsatisfactory" and added that authorities "have generally been ineffective in restoring a climate of law and order. "

Annan's report said most of the human rights violations committed during a 1995 Croatian offensive — observers cited 120 suspicious deaths — have for the most part not been resolved.

"If there is to be genuine improvement in the disturbing situation...efforts by both international and local organizations to promote confidence and reconciliation will continue to be needed," the report said.

The report also said little progress had been made on returning younger relatives of the elderly Croatian Serbs who have remained in zones controlled by Zagreb.

"While more than 14,000 persons have received government permission to return to the country, less than a quarter of them, mostly additional elderly Croatian Serbs, have returned to the former sectors themselves," the report said.

On the War Crimes Tribunal, the report cited "strong ground for concern that the government is withholding its full cooperation. " Croatia has maintained that no one indicted by the tribunal is on Croatian territory.

"Croatia's cooperation with the international tribune continues to be unsatisfactory," the report said.

(AFP)

Huge Disparities Seen in World Childbirth Mortality Rates

MARRAKESH, Morocco — Every year, more than a million women die in childbirth around the world, as do 8 to 10 million babies, according to estimates released at the first World Childbirth Mortality Congress.

Another five million infants remain handicapped for life because of poor childbirth conditions, according to the specialists.

Dr. Daniel Weinstein, president of the Congress, which attracted 2,500 doctors, said that causes of death are compiled in only 78 countries, in which only about a third of humankind lives.

These figures, released by the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, show that in these countries, 585,000 women die in childbirth each year, out of 150 million births worldwide.

Ninety-nine percent of these deaths occur in Third World countries, while 88 percent of all births occur in the Third World.

The disparities of risk of death at childbirth are huge, Weinstein told the Congress — one in seven for a Somalian woman, one in 9,200 for a Spanish woman.

The risks are also surprisingly different within the same region — one in 33 in Morocco, one in 120 in Algeria and one in 140 in Tunisia, Weinstein said.

In the United States, the risk is more than twice as high as in Canada: 3,500 versus 7,700. In Europe, it ranges from one in 9,200 in Spain to one in 5,100 in Britain and one in 3,100 in France.

Hemorrhaging, according to Weinstein, is the leading cause of death, with 25 percent, or 140,000, of the 585,000 known cases.

Other causes include blood poisoning, or septicemia, with 100,000 cases; clandestine abortions and hypertension, with 75,000 cases each, and obstruction of labor, with 40,000 cases.

Indirect causes, such as anemia, diabetes, malaria and heart disease account for the remaining 20 percent.

Risk factors include access to emergency medical care, often lacking in poor rural areas; age (women over 35) and insufficient time between births.

Weinstein noted that cultural factors also weigh on childbirth mortality rates. He said that in many cultures where food is scarce, girls receive less than boys, making them more fragile than boys.

(AFP)

Reflection of Iranian Cinema in Foreign Press, Festivals



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Ever since the culmination of Islamic Revolution in 1979, the Iranian film industry has met new horizons. It has given birth to some masterpiece films praised in world festivals. Now, organizers of the film festivals have recognized the great revolution in the film industry of Iran has occurred.

According to some foreign cinematic figures, Iranian cinema is now being taken seriously.

Mrs. Etsoku Dohi, 33, first chairwoman for the Executive Committee of Tokyo International Film Festival said: "My first familiarity with the Iranian films goes back to the years I was working in a film distribution company. The first Iranian film I saw was *'And the Life Goes On'* by Abbas Kiarostami."

Since then she has visited Iran for several times. Her impression of the Iranian culture: "The people in Iran sit on the ground. They eat and lay their bed on the ground, too. They are so tender hearted. Tears roll down their cheeks easily."

Her first impression of the Iranian people is not something other than what has and is being reflected in Iranian films.

According to the Japanese woman, no one can have a negative attitude toward Iran, once he/she watches an Iranian movie.

"It is my understanding that Iranian films shorten the distance between hearts and minds," noted Dohi.

The film industry, however, faces some economic problems — or 'economic crisis' as Mrs. Dohi said. The first and foremost step to be taken in this regard, is granting loans to filmmakers at the first half of the year not the second half.

Robert Richter, film critic and scriptwriter, believes that Iranian film industry has passed behind three eras: Before the revolution; during the 60s and 70s (some films on social themes went on screen and most of them were introduced to European festivals); and finally the Iranian cinema after the revolution, which gave rise to values such as humanity, religion, and the role and status of women in cinema.

Richter believes that Iranian films, specially documentary features, manifest the Iranian creativity. Like messengers, the Iranian films clear out the false impressions of Iran in foreign press.

"Recently I paid a visit to Tehran. What I discovered myself was quite different from what I had read in the newspapers or heard from news agencies. The people in Iran are mostly after their own social and economic affairs."

Robert Richter says that the best way to get acquainted with eastern life, is getting to know Iran and Iranian films, understand their symbols. In the world of art, we also introduce such themes as poverty, economic problems, etc. but Iranian films go into the core of the matter to make it palpable.

The various international awards received by Iranian film directors, are solid evidences of the fact that Iranian cinema is enjoying a sharp growth.

In Leipzig International Film Festival, an Iranian film inaugurated the festival and some 20 Iranian films were on the menu.

Various occasions can be cited here to support the claim that Iranian cinema is rushing to take its real stance in international film industry.

Makotushi Nozaki, Japanese film director, confesses watching an Iranian film was enough to change her mind of the false prejudgment that "Iranian women suffer a lot in film industry and society as well."

About ten year ago, she watched an Iranian film by Amir Naderi in Tokyo, *The Runner*, and she was affected by the movie in a way that later on "I was looking for Iranian films every where."

She was lucky enough to attend the Fajr International Film Festival in Feb. 1993 and watch some thirty Iranian films. During her visit she talked to many actors, actresses, directors and filmmakers, etc. to understand that "Iranian people are very friendly, very sensitive and very lovely."

Many cinematic personalities from around the world visit Iran every year and all return to their countries believing that 'Iranian cinema has something to say in the field.'

It is to the responsible authorities of the film industry in Iran to remove a few important obstacles in the way thus double the successes of Iranian film industry in world festivals.

Police Search for Stolen Turner Painting

SYDNEY, Australia — Australian police have contacted Interpol in their search for a stolen painting by 19th century English master Joseph Turner that is worth as much as $4 million ($U.S. 3.1 million).

The painting was taken from a suburban Sydney home on Dec. 28, but details of the burglary were only made public last Friday.

A police spokesman said the painting, *"Royal Barge on Stormy Seas,"* was a family heirloom.

It was insured for $350,000 ($U.S. 273,000), but art experts estimate its market value is many times greater.

It was described as being 75 centimeters (29.5 inches) by 100 centimeters (39 inches) and predominantly green and yellow.

Nine other paintings and two 300-year-old Hebrew and Latin books were also taken along with other items.

Detectives theorize a lone thief disabled an elaborate alarm system and broke into the home while its owners were away on vacation.

(AP)

Daily Food for Thought

On Ambition

Men at some time are masters of their fates:
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves that we are underlings.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
Julius Caesar

'The Miserable' Donates Box Office Bounty to Quake-Stricken Areas

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — To encourage the spirit of affinity and revive the Islamic values, Bahman Farhangsara (Cultural House) donates The Miserable's box office income on Mar. 12-14 to the quake-stricken people of Ardebil Province. According to a fax received by the daily, those interested in participating in this humanitarian act may reserve seats at 5312300 or refer in person to the box office of the play located at the southern gate of Laleh Park.

Tehran to Host Oman's Cultural Week Next Month

TEHRAN — In a meeting here today with Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Mostafa Mirsalim, the Omani ambassador in Tehran Musallam bin Bakheet Zeidan al-Barami exchanged views on setting up of his country's cultural week in Tehran next month.

In the meeting, Mirsalim emphasized the need for further expansion of bilateral relations in cultural fields, expressing hope that holding of Oman's Cultural Week in the Iranian capital will pave the way for the two Muslim countries to become more acquainted with either country's culture.

Toward the end of the meeting the Omani ambassador presented Mirsalim a message from his country's Minister of National Heritage and Culture Faisal bin Faisal.

(IRNA)

Malta Tourism Drops in January

VALLETTA — Tourist arrivals in Malta dropped nearly seven percent in January to 36,500 from 39,200 in January 1996, the Central Office of Statistics said on Saturday.

The biggest decline was in the German market, which fell by 2,500 visitors. The British market, Malta's biggest, rose by 500.

The office attributed the shifts to exchange rate fluctuations.

Tourism in January has been in decline since 1994 when 42,726 visited the Mediterranean island during the month. Malta had 40,874 visitors in January 1995.

(Reuter)

Three Iranian Films to Be on Show at Lebanese Cinemas

BEIRUT — Three Iranian films are to be shown at one of the local cinemas for a period of two weeks.

The films on show would be *'White Balloon'* by Ja'far Panahi, *'Sara'* by Daryoush Mehrjouie and *'Father'* by Majid Majidi.

Earlier, several Iranian films had been screened at Lebanese cinemas, which were welcomed by viewers, particularly by film critics.

(IRNA)

Psychology and the Use of Colors as Symbols

By: Behrooz Musavi

Colors, like many other things, are used as symbols and can be of benefit to individuals or societies by elevating their artistic well-being.

One can just imagine this world if there were no colors. Like poems, feelings and music, life would be monotonous and drab if they were to be taken away.

Since time immemorial, man has lived with colors and certain colors are seen to represent certain thoughts and emotions. Red, for instance, symbolizes anger, hatred and agitation.

Red is identified with blood and watching the color red makes one feel warm and alive.

Red is also called the color of life.

Fire and blood, two common natural phenomena, are both red in color and are considered the pillars of civilization and the source of life.

According to the color scheme, red is a primary color. In other words, wherever it exists in nature it is not the result of a mixture or a combination of two or more colors.

The human eye is able to see colors at a 400-700 millimicron wave length. Red has a 650-800 millimicron wave length and is said to have a high attraction force.

The *Tehran Times* has chosen the color red for its logo. Red is its symbol of infinite energy, enthusiasm and perseverance.

Red in Literature

In the story entitled *"Dash Akol,"* written by Sadeq Hedayat, red is used to heighten the story's climax. The writer further uses a husk, red hat, dagger, two bowls of blood, liver, red eyes and scarf to portray a sense of toughness in particular scenes.

Red, wherever it is used in the story, is used to produce excitement in the mind of the reader, which is what usually happens.

Red in Medicine

Red, as earlier pointed out, is the color of blood. Blood, in ancient times, is thought to denote life. Red is also the color of love, intimacy, firmness and endurance.

Chinese, Indian and Iranian medicine have employed the science of color therapy since a millenium ago.

Color therapy is simply a method of treating disease by resorting to the use of particular colors. The science of color therapy, as the name indicates, does not promise to cure a disease but helps to understand particular diseases by restoring the patient's condition and physical needs.

The use of a red light on a patient creates a mental and nervous impact on him and is useful in activating particular cells in his body.

In Iran, ancient medical practitioners relying on the teachings of Islamic leaders used a red light to cure measles without basically understanding why it had a curative effect.

Modern medicine has now confirmed that the use of the red light did cure measles and other similar diseases.

Red and Its Effect on the Sympatic Nerves

Modern science has proven that ample use of the color red on the sympatic nerves results in raising the body's activity thereby lowering the person's sense of peace and tranquility.

'Toward Light' to Get Pilgrims Acquainted With Haj Rites

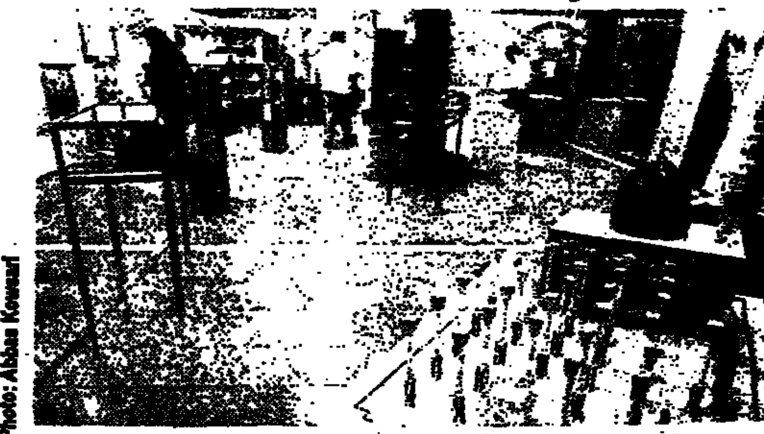


Photo: Abbas Kowsari

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — "Haj is a sort of worship, within which all elements of servanthood and submission to the Almighty have gathered together to lead the man toward spirituality.

With only two pieces of garments, the Haj pilgrims manifest their ignorance of materiality and intend to say that they have forgotten their families and kinsmen for the sake of God.

What dominates their mind and soul is only seeking God's pleasure and going toward the light, to join the light."

'Toward Light' is an exhibition held on the occasion of the Haj Week at the Haj and Pilgrimage Organization, Azadi Ave. This interesting exhibition includes various sections as: photo, book, statistical tables, pilgrims' cloths and food in Saudi Arabia, computer software, video cassettes on Haj rituals and rites, etc.

The purpose behind holding the exhibition, organizers say, is to get pilgrims acquainted with the programs, rituals and rites of Haj.

The exhibition provides all the information on Haj from past and present, the names of caravans, pilgrims, flight agenda, etc.

Also some beautiful replicas of Masjed al-Hram, Medina, and Baghi' Graveyard are on display in the exhibition.

The exhibition will run until Mar. 17, 1997 and is open to the public.